2 Vols
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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK.

ALEX. V. BLAKE, PUBLISHER.

THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

WITH AN

ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY

ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

SECOND COMPLETE AMERICAN EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

I.

NEW-YORK:
ALEXANDER V. BLAKE, PUBLISHER.
SOLD BY COLLINS, KEESE & CO., NEW YORK; OTIS, BROADERS & CO., BOSTON,
THOMAS, COWPERTHWAIT & CO., PHILADELPHIA.

1844.

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AN ESSAY

ON

THE LIFE AND GENIUS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON. LL. D.

When the works of a great writer, who has bequeathed to posterity a lasting legacy, are presented to the world, it is naturally expected, that some account of his life should accompany the edition. The reader wishes to know as much as possible of the author. The circumstances that attended him, the features of his private character, his conversation, and the means by which he rose to eminence, becomes the favourite objects of inquiry. Curiosity is excited; and the admirer of his works is eager to know his private opinions, his course of study, the particularities of his conduct, and, above all, whether he pursued the wisdom which he recommends, and practised the virtue which his writings inspire. A principle of gratitude is awakened in every generous mind. For the entertainment and instruction which genius and diligence have provided for the world, men of refined and sensible tempers are ready to pay their tribute of praise, and even to form a posthumous friendship with the author.

In reviewing the life of such a writer, there is, besides, a rule of justice to which the public have an undoubted claim. Fond admiration and partial friendship should not be suffered to represent his virtues with exaggeration; nor should malignity be allowed, under a specious disguise, to magnify mere defects, the usual failings of human nature, into vice or gross deformity. The lights and shades of the character should be given; and, if this be done with a strict regard to truth, a just estimate of Dr. Johnson will afford a lesson, perhaps as valuable as the moral doctrine that speaks with energy in every page of his works.

The present writer enjoyed the conversation and friendship of that excellent man more than thirty years. He thought it an honour to be so connected, and to this hour he reflects on his loss with regret: but regret, he knows has secret bribes, by which the judgment may be influenced, and partial affection may be carried beyond the bounds of truth. In the present case, however, nothing needs to be disguised, and exaggerated praise is unnecessary. It is an observation of the younger Pliny, in his Epistle to his friend Tacitus, that history ought never to magnify matters of fact, because worthy actions require nothing but the truth. *Nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit.* This rule the present biographer promises shall guide his pen throughout the following narrative.

It may be said, the death of Dr. Johnson kept the public mind in agitation beyond all former example. No literary character ever excited so much attention; and, when the press has teemed with anecdotes, apophthegms, essays, and publications of every kind, what occasion now for a new tract on the same threadbare subject? The plain truth shall be the answer. The proprietors of Johnson's Works thought the life, which they prefixed to their former edition, too unwieldy for republication. The prodigious variety of foreign matter, introduced into that performance, seemed to overload the memory of Dr. Johnson, and in the account of his own life to leave him hardly visible. They wished to have a more concise, and, for that reason, perhaps a more satisfactory account, such as may exhibit a just picture of the man, and keep him the principal figure in the foreground of his own picture. To comply with that request is the design of this essay, which the writer undertakes with a trembling hand. He has no discoveries, no secret anecdotes, no occasional controversy, no sudden flashes of wit and humour, no private conversation, and no new facts to embellish his work. Every thing has been gleaned. Dr. Johnson said of himself, "I am not uncandid nor severe: I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest, and people are apt to think me serious."* The exercise of that privilege which is enjoyed by every man in society, has not been allowed to him. His fame has given importance even to trifles; and the zeal of his friends has brought every thing to light. What should be related, and what should not, has been published without distinction. *Dicenda tacenda locuti!* Every thing that fell from him has been caught with eagerness by his admirers, who, as he says in one of his letters, have acted with the diligence of spies upon his conduct. To some of them the following lines, in Mallet's Poem, on verbal criticism, are not inapplicable:

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. ii. p. 465. 4to. edit

"Such that grave bird in Northern seas is found,
Whose name a Dutchman only knows to sound;
Where'er the king of fish moves on before,
This humble friend attends from shore to shore;
With eye still earnest, and with bill inclined,
He picks up what his patron left behind,
With those choice cates his palate to regale,
And is the careful *Tibbald* of a *Whale*."

After so many essays and volumes of *Johnsoniana*, what remains for the present writer? Perhaps, what has not been attempted; a short, yet full—a faithful, yet temperate, history of Dr. Johnson.

Samuel Johnson was born at Litchfield, September 7, 1709, O. S.* His father Michael Johnson was a bookseller in that city; a man of large athletic make, and violent passions; wrong-headed, positive, and at times afflicted with a degree of melancholy, little short of madness. His mother was sister to Dr. Ford, a practising physician, and father of Cornelius Ford, generally known by the name of Parson Ford, the same who is represented near the punch-bowl in Hogarth's Midnight Modern Conversation. In the life of Fenton, Johnson says, that "his abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise." Being chaplain to the Earl of Chesterfield, he wished to attend that nobleman on his embassy to the Hague. Colley Cibber has recorded the anecdote. "You should go," said the witty peer, "if to your many vices you would add one more." "Pray, my Lord, what is that?" "Hypocrisy, my dear Doctor." Johnson had a younger brother named Nathaniel, who died at the age of twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Michael Johnson, the father, was chosen in the year 1718, under bailiff of Litchfield; and in the year 1725 he served the office of the senior bailiff. He had a brother of the name of Andrew, who, for some years, kept the ring at Smithfield, appropriated to wrestlers and boxers. Our author used to say, that he was never thrown or conquered. Michael, the father, died December 1731, at the age of seventy-six; his mother at eighty-nine, of a gradual decay, in the year 1759. Of the family nothing more can be related worthy of notice. Johnson did not delight in talking of his relations. "There is little pleasure," he said to Mrs. Piozzi, "in relating the anecdotes of beggary."

Johnson derived from his parents, or from an unwholesome nurse, the distemper called the king's evil. The jacobites at that time believed in the efficacy of the royal touch; and accordingly Mrs. Johnson presented her son, when two years old, before Queen Anne, who, for the first time, performed that office, and communicated to her young patient all the healing virtue in her power. He was afterwards cut for that scrophulous humour, and the under part of his face was seamed and disfigured by the operation. It is supposed that this disease deprived him of the sight of his left eye, and also impaired his hearing. At eight years old he was placed under Mr. Hawkins, at the Free-school in Litchfield, where he was not remarkable for diligence or regular application. Whatever he read, his tenacious memory made his own. In the fields with his school-fellows, he talked more to himself than with his companions. In 1725, when he was about sixteen years old, he went on a visit to his cousin Cornelius Ford, who detained him for some months, and in the mean time assisted him in the classics. The general direction for his studies, which he then received, he related to Mrs. Piozzi. "Obtain," says Ford, "some general principles of every science: he who can talk only on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted, and perhaps never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit, and always please." This advice Johnson seems to have pursued with a good inclination. His reading was always desultory, seldom resting on any particular author, but rambling from one book to another, and, by hasty snatches, hoarding up a variety of knowledge. It may be proper in this place to mention another general rule laid down by Ford for Johnson's future conduct: "You will make your way the more easily in the world, as you are contented to dispute no man's claim to conversation excellence: they will, therefore, more willingly allow your pretensions as a writer." "But," says Mrs. Piozzi, "the features of peculiarity, which mark a character to all succeeding generations, are slow in coming to their growth." That ingenious lady adds, with her usual vivacity, "Can one, on such an occasion, forbear recollecting the predictions of Boileau's father, who said, stroking the head of the young satirist, 'this little man has too much wit, but he will never speak ill of any one?'"

On Johnson's return from Cornelius Ford, Mr. Hunter, then master of the Free-school at Litchfield, refused to receive him again on that foundation. At this distance of time, what his reasons were, it is vain to inquire; but to refuse assistance to a lad of promising genius must be pronounced harsh and illiberal. It did not, however stop the progress of the young student's education. He was placed at another school, at Stourbridge in Worcestershire, under the care of Mr. Wentworth. Having gone through the rudiments of classic literature, he returned to his father's house, and was probably intended for the trade of a bookseller. He has been heard to say that he could bind a book. At the end of two years, being then about nineteen, he went to assist the studies of a young gentleman of the name of Corbett, to the University of Oxford; and on the 31st of October, 1728, both were entered of Pembroke College; Corbett, as a gentleman-commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. The college tutor, Mr. Jordan, was a man of no genius; and Johnson, it seems, showed an early contempt of mean abilities, in one or two instances behaving with insolence to that gentleman. Of his general conduct at the university there are no particulars that merit attention, except the translation of Pope's Messiah, which was a college exercise imposed upon him as a task, by Mr. Jordan. Corbett left the university in about two years, and Johnson's salary ceased. He was by consequence straitened in his circumstances: but he still remained at college. Mr Jordan the tutor, went off to a living; and was succeeded by Dr. Adams, who afterwards be

*This appears in a note to Johnson's Diary, prefixed to the first of his prayers. After the alteration of the style, he kept his birth-day on the 18th of September, and it is accordingly marked September, 7-18.

came head of the college, and was esteemed through life for his learning, his talents, and his amiable character. Johnson grew more regular in his attendance. Ethics, theology, and classic literature, were his favourite studies. He discovered, notwithstanding, early symptoms of that wandering disposition of mind, which adhered to him to the end of his life. His reading was by fits and starts, undirected to any particular science. General philology, agreeably to his cousin Ford's advice, was the object of his ambition. He received, at that time, an early impression of piety, and a taste for the best authors, ancient and modern. It may, notwithstanding, be questioned whether, except his Bible, he ever read a book entirely through. Late in life, if any man praised a book in his presence, he was sure to ask, "Did you read it through?" If the answer was in the affirmative, he did not seem willing to believe it. He continued at the university till the want of pecuniary supplies obliged him to quit the place. He obtained, however, the assistance of a friend, and returning in a short time, was able to complete a residence of three years. The history of his exploits, at Oxford, he used to say, was best known to Dr. Taylor and Dr. Adams. Wonders are told of his memory, and, indeed, all who knew him late in life, can witness that he retained that faculty in the greatest vigour.

From the university Johnson returned to Litchfield. His father died soon after, December 1731; and the whole receipt out of his effects, as appeared by a memorandum in the son's hand-writing, dated 15th June, 1732, was no more than twenty pounds.* In this exigence, determined that poverty should neither depress his spirit nor warp his integrity, he became under-master of a grammar-school at Market-Bosworth in Leicestershire. That resource, however, did not last long. Disgusted by the pride of Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of that little seminary, he left the place in discontent, and ever after spoke of it with abhorrence. In 1733 he went on a visit to Mr. Hector, who had been his school-fellow, and was then a surgeon at Birmingham, lodging at the house of Warren, a bookseller. At that place Johnson translated a voyage to Abyssinia, written by Jerome Lobo, a Portuguese missionary. This was the first literary work from the pen of Dr. Johnson. His friend Hector was occasionally his amanuensis. The work was, probably, undertaken at the desire of Warren, the bookseller, and was printed at Birmingham; but it appears in the Literary Magazine, or History of the Works of the Learned, for March 1735, that it was published by Bettesworth and Hitch, Paternoster-row. It contains a narrative of the endeavours of a company of missionaries to convert the people of Abyssinia to the Church of Rome. In the preface to this work Johnson observes, "that the Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general view of his countrymen, has amused his readers with no romantic absurdities, or incredible fiction. He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks, that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey, without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants. The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blessed with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sunshine: nor are the nations, here described, either void of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues: here are no Hottentots without religion, polity, or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences: he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that, wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniences by particular favours."——We have here an early specimen of Johnson's manner; the vein of thinking and the frame of the sentences are manifestly his: we see the infant Hercules. The translation of Lobo's Narrative has been reprinted lately in a separate volume, with some other tracts of Dr. Johnson's, and therefore forms no part of this edition; but a compendious account of so interesting a work as Father Lobo's discovery of the head of the Nile will not, it is imagined, be unacceptable to the reader.

Father Lobo, the Portuguese Missionary, embarked, in 1622, in the same fleet with the Count *Vidigueira*, who was appointed, by the king of Portugal, Viceroy of the Indies. They arrived at Goa; and, in January 1624, Father Lobo set out on the mission to Abyssinia. Two of the Jesuits, sent on the same commission, were murdered in their attempt to penetrate into that empire. Lobo had better success; he surmounted all difficulties, and made his way into the heart of the country. Then follows a description of Abyssinia, formerly the largest empire of which we have an account in history. It extended from the Red Sea to the kingdom of Congo, and from Egypt to the Indian Sea, containing no less than forty provinces. At the time of Lobo's mission, it was not much larger than Spain, consisting then but of five kingdoms, of which part was entirely subject to the Emperor, and part paid him a tribute, as an acknowledgment. The provinces were inhabited by Moors, Pagans, Jews, and Christians. The last was, in Lobo's time, the established and reigning religion. The diversity of people and religion is the reason why the kingdom was under different forms of government, with laws and customs extremely various. Some of the people neither sowed their lands, nor improved them by any kind of culture, living upon milk and flesh, and, like the Arabs, encamping without any settled habitation. In some places they practised no rites of worship, though they believed that, in the regions above, there dwells a Being that governs the world. This Deity they call in their language *Oul*. The Christianity professed by the people in some parts, is corrupted with superstitious errors, and here-

* The entry of this is remarkable, for his early resolution to preserve through life a fair and upright character. "1732, Junii 15. Undecim aureos deposui, quo die, quidquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti scilicet libras, accepi. Usque adeo mihi mea fortuna fingenda est interea, et ne paupertate vires animi languescant, ne in flagitia egestas adigat, cavendum."

sies, and so mingled with ceremonies borrowed from the Jews, that little, besides the name of Christianity, is to be found among them. The Abyssins cannot properly be said to have either cities or houses; they live in tents or cottages made of straw or clay, very rarely building with stone. Their villages or towns consist of these huts; yet even of such villages they have but few; because the grandees, the viceroys, and the emperor himself, are always in camp, that they may be prepared, upon the most sudden alarm, to meet every emergence, in a country which is engaged every year either in foreign wars or intestine commotions. Ethiopia produces very near the same kinds of provision as Portugal, though, by the extreme laziness of the inhabitants, in a much less quantity. What the ancients imagined of the torrid zone being a part of the world uninhabitable, is so far from being true, that the climate is very temperate. The blacks have better features than in other countries, and are not without wit and ingenuity. Their apprehension is quick, and their judgment sound. There are in the climate two harvests in the year: one in winter, which lasts through the months of July, August and September; the other in the Spring. They have, in the greatest plenty, raisins, peaches, pomegranates, sugar-canes, and some figs. Most of these are ripe about Lent, which the Abyssins keep with great strictness. The animals of the country are the lion, the elephant, the rhinoceros, the unicorn, horses, mules, oxen, and cows without number. They have a very particular custom, which obliges every man, that has a thousand cows, to save every year one day's milk of all his herd, and make a bath with it for his relations. This they do so many days in each year, as they have thousands of cattle; so that, to express how rich a man is, they tell you *he bathes so many times.*

"Of the river Nile, which has furnished so much controversy, we have a full and clear description. It is called by the natives, Abavi, the Father of Water. It rises in Sacala, a province of the kingdom of Goiama, the most fertile and agreeable part of the Abyssinian dominions. On the Eastern side of the country, on the declivity of a mountain, whose descent is so easy, that it seems a beautiful plain, is that source of the Nile, which has been sought after at so much expense and labour. This spring, or rather these two springs, are two holes, each about two feet diameter, a stone's cast distant from each other. One of them is about five feet and a half in depth. Lobo was not able to sink his plummet lower, perhaps, because it was stopped by roots, the whole place being full of trees. A line of ten feet did not reach the bottom of the other. These springs are supposed by the Abyssins to be the vents of a great subterraneous lake. At a small distance to the South, is a village called Guix, through which you ascend to the top of the mountain, where there is a little hill, which the idolatrous Agaci hold in great veneration. Their priest calls them together to this place once a year: and every one sacrifices a cow, or more, according to the different degrees of wealth and devotion Hence we have sufficient proof, that these nations always paid adoration to the Deity of this famous river.

"As to the course of the Nile, its waters, after the first rise, run towards the East, about the length of a musket-shot: then, turning northward, continue hidden in the grass and weeds for about a quarter of a league, when they reappear amongst a quantity of rocks. The Nile from its source proceeds with so inconsiderable a current, that it is in danger of being dried up by the hot season; but soon receiving an increase from the Gemma, the Keltu, the Bransa, and the other smaller rivers, it expands to such a breadth in the plains of Boad, which is not above three days' journey from its source, that a musket-ball will scarcely fly from one bank to the other. Here it begins to run northward, winding, however, a little to the East for the space of nine or ten leagues, and then enters the so-much-talked-of Lake of Dambia, flowing with such violent rapidity, that its waters may be distinguished through the whole passage, which is no less than six leagues. Here begins the greatness of the Nile. Fifteen miles further, in the land of Alata, it rushes precipitately from the top of a high rock, and forms one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the world. Lobo says, he passed under it without being wet, and resting himself, for the sake of the coolness, was charmed with a thousand delightful rainbows, which the sunbeams painted on the water, in all their shining and lively colours.* The fall of this mighty stream, from so great a height, makes a noise that may be heard at a considerable distance; but it was not found, that the neighbouring inhabitants were deaf. After the cataract, the Nile collects its scattered stream among the rocks, which are so near each other, that in Lobo's time, a bridge of beams, on which the whole imperial army passed, was laid over them. Sultan Sequed has since built a stone bridge of one arch, in the same place, for which purpose he procured masons from India. Here the river alters its course, and passes through various kingdoms, such as Amhara, Olaca, Choaa, Damot, and the kingdom of Goiama, and, after various windings, returns within a short day's journey of its spring. To pursue it through all its mazes, and accompany it round the kingdom of Goiama, is a journey of twenty-nine days. From Abyssinia, the river passes into the countries of Fazulo and Ombarea, two vast regions little known, inhabited by nations entirely different from the Abyssins. Their hair, like that of the other blacks in those regions, is short and curled. In the year 1615, Rassela Christos, Lieutenant-General to Sultan Sequed, entered those kingdoms in a hostile manner; but, not being able to get intelligence, returned without attempting any thing. As the empire of Abyssinia terminates at these descents, Lobo followed the course of the Nile no farther, leaving it to range over barbarous kingdoms, and convey wealth and plenty into Ægypt, which owes to the annual inundations

* This, Mr. Bruce, the late traveller, avers to be a downright falsehood. He says, a deep pool of water reaches to the very foot of the rock; and allowing that there was a seat or bench (which there is not) in the middle of the pool, it is absolutely impossible, by any exertion of human strength, to have arrived at it. But it may be asked, can Mr. Bruce say, what was the face of the country in the year 1622, when Lobo saw the magnificent sight which he has described? Mr. Bruce's pool of water may have been formed since; and Lobo, perhaps, was content to sit down without a bench.

of this river its envied fertility.* Lobo knows nothing of the Nile in the rest of its passage, except that it receives great increase from many other rivers, has several cataracts like that already described, and that few fish are to be found in it; that scarcity is to be attributed to the river horse and the crocodile, which destroy the weaker inhabitants of the river. Something, likewise, must be imputed to the cataracts, where fish cannot fall without being killed. Lobo adds, that neither he, nor any with whom he conversed about the crocodile, ever saw him weep; and therefore all that hath been said about his tears must be ranked among the fables invented for the amusement of children.

As to the causes of the inundations of the Nile, Lobo observes, that many an idle hypothesis has been framed. Some theorists ascribe it to the high winds, that stop the current, and force the water above its banks. Others pretend a subterraneous communication between the Ocean and the Nile, and that the sea, when violently agitated, swells the river. Many are of opinion, that this mighty flood proceeds from the melting of the snow on the mountains of Ethiopia; but so much snow and such prodigious heat are never met with in the same region. Lobo never saw snow in Abyssinia, except on Mount Semen in the kingdom of Tigre, very remote from the Nile; and on Namara, which is, indeed, not far distant, but where there never falls snow enough to wet, when dissolved, the foot of the mountain. To the immense labours of the Portuguese, mankind is indebted for the knowledge of the real cause of these inundations, so great and so regular. By them we are informed, that Abyssinia, where the Nile rises, is full of mountains, and in its natural situation, is much higher than Egypt; that in the winter, from June to September, no day is without rain; that the Nile receives in its course, all the rivers, brooks, and torrents, that fall from those mountains, and, by necessary consequence, swelling above its banks, fills the plains of Egypt with inundations, which come regularly about the month of July, or three weeks after the beginning of the rainy season in Ethiopia. The different degrees of this flood are such certain indications of the fruitfulness or sterility of the ensuing year, that it is publicly proclaimed at Cairo how much the water hath gained during the night."

Such is the account of the Nile and its inundations, which it is hoped will not be deemed an improper or tedious digression, especially as the whole is an extract from Johnson's translation. He is all the time the actor in the scene, and in his own words relates the story. Having finished this work, he returned, in February 1734, to his native city, and, in the month of August following, published proposals for printing by subscription the Latin Poems of Politian, with the History of Latin Poetry, from the Era of Petrarch, to the time of Politian; and also the life of Politian, to be added by the Editor, Samuel Johnson. The book to be printed in thirty octavo sheets, price five shillings. It is to be regretted that this project failed for want of encouragement. Johnson, it seems, differed from Boileau, Voltaire, and D'Alembert, who had taken upon them to proscribe all modern efforts to write with elegance in a dead language. For a decision pronounced in so high a tone, no good reason can be assigned. The interests of learning require that the diction of Greece and Rome should be cultivated with care; and he who can write a language with correctness, will be most likely to understand its idiom, its grammar, and its peculiar graces of style. What man of taste would willingly forego the pleasure of reading Vida, Fracastorius, Sannazaro, Strada, and others, down to the late elegant productions of Bishop Lowth? The history which Johnson proposed to himself would, beyond all question, have been a valuable addition to the history of letters; but his project failed. His next expedient was to offer his assistance to Cave, the original projector of the Gentleman's Magazine. For this purpose he sent his proposals in a letter, offering, on reasonable terms, occasionally to fill some pages with poems and inscriptions never printed before; with fugitive pieces that deserved to be revived, and critical remarks on authors ancient and modern. Cave agreed to retain him as a correspondent and contributor to the Magazine. What the conditions were cannot now be known; but certainly they were not sufficient to hinder Johnson from casting his eyes about him in quest of other employment. Accordingly, in 1735, he made overtures to the Rev. Mr. Budworth, Master of a Grammar-school at Brerewood, in Staffordshire, to become his assistant. This proposition did not succeed. Mr. Budworth apprehended, that the involuntary motions, to which Johnson's nerves were subject, might make him an object of ridicule with his scholars, and, by consequence, lessen their respect for their master. Another mode of advancing himself presented itself about this time. Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer in Birmingham, admired his talents. It is said that she had about eight hundred pounds; and that sum to a person in Johnson's circumstances was an affluent fortune. A marriage took place, and to turn his wife's money to the best advantage, he projected the scheme of an academy for education. Gilbert Walmsley, at that time Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court of the Bishop of Litchfield, was distinguished by his erudition, and the politeness of his manners. He was the friend of Johnson, and, by his weight and influence endeavoured to promote his interest. The celebrated Garrick, whose father, Captain Garrick, lived at Litchfield, was placed in the new seminary of education, by that gentleman's advice.—Garrick was then about eighteen years old. An accession of seven or eight pupils was the most that could be obtained, though notice was given by a public advertisement,† that at Edial, near Litchfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek Languages, by Samuel Johnson.

The undertaking proved abortive. Johnson having now abandoned all hopes of promoting his fortune in the country, determined to become an adventurer in the world at large. His young pupil, Garrick, had formed the same resolution;

* After comparing this description with that lately given by Mr. Bruce, the reader will judge whether Lobo is to lose the honour of having been at the head of the Nile near two centuries before any other European traveller.

† See the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736, p. 418

and, accordingly, in March, 1737, they arrived in London together. Two such candidates for fame, perhaps never before that day entered the metropolis together. Their stock of money was soon exhausted. In his visionary project of an academy, Johnson had probably wasted his wife's substance; and Garrick's father had little more than his half-pay. The two fellow-travellers had the world before them, and each was to choose his road to fortune and to fame. They brought with them genius, and powers of mind, peculiarly formed by nature for the different vocations to which each of them felt himself inclined. They acted from the impulse of young minds, even then meditating great things, and with courage anticipating success. Their friend Mr. Walmsley, by a letter to the Rev. Mr. Colson, who, it seems, was a great mathematician, exerted his good offices in their favour. He gave notice of their intended journey. "Davy Garrick," he said, "will be with you next week; and Johnson, to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation either from the Latin or French. Johnson is a very good scholar and a poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy writer. If it should be in your way, I doubt not but you will be ready to recommend and assist your countrymen." Of Mr. Walmsley's merit, and the excellence of his character, Johnson has left a beautiful testimonial at the end of the Life of Edward Smith. It is reasonable to conclude, that a mathematician, absorbed in abstract speculations, was not able to find a sphere of action for two men who were to be the architects of their own fortune. In three or four years afterwards Garrick came forth, with talents that astonished the public. He began his career at Goodman's-fields, and there, *monstratus fatis Vespasianus!* he chose a lucrative profession, and consequently soon emerged from all his difficulties. Johnson was left to toil in the humble walks of literature. A tragedy, as appears by Walmsley's letter, was the whole of his stock. This, most probably, was IRENE; but, if then finished, it was doomed to wait for a more happy period. It was offered to Fleetwood, and rejected. Johnson looked round him for employment. Having, while he remained in the country, corresponded with Cave, under a feigned name, he now thought it time to make himself known to a man whom he considered as a patron of literature. Cave had announced, by public advertisement, a prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; and this circumstance diffused an idea of his liberality. Johnson became connected with him in business, and in a close and intimate acquaintance. Of Cave's character it is unnecessary to say any thing in this place, as Johnson was afterwards the biographer of his first and most useful patron. To be engaged in the translation of some important book was still the object which Johnson had in view. For this purpose he proposed to give the History of the Council of Trent, with copious notes, then lately added to a French edition. Twelve sheets of this work were printed, for which Johnson received forty-nine pounds, as appears by his receipt in the possession of Mr. Nichols, the compiler of that entertaining and useful work, the Gentleman's Magazine. Johnson's translation was never completed: a like design was offered to the public, under the patronage of Dr. Zachary Pearce; and by that contention both attempts were frustrated. Johnson had been commended by Pope for the translation of the Messiah into Latin verse; but he knew no approach to so eminent a man. With one, however, who was connected with Pope, he became acquainted at St. John's Gate; and that person was no other than the well-known Richard Savage, whose life was afterwards written by Johnson, with great elegance, and a depth of moral reflection. Savage was a man of considerable talents. His address, his various accomplishments, and, above all, the peculiarity of his misfortunes, recommended him to Johnson's notice. They became united in the closest intimacy. Both had great parts, and they were equally under the pressure of want. Sympathy joined them in a league of friendship. Johnson has been often heard to relate, that he and Savage walked round Grosvenor-square till four in the morning; in the course of their conversation reforming the world, dethroning princes, establishing new forms of government, and giving laws to the several states of Europe; till, fatigued at length with their legislative office, they began to feel the want of refreshment, but could not muster up more than fourpence-halfpenny. Savage, it is true, had many vices: but vice could never strike its roots in a mind like Johnson's, seasoned early with religion, and the principles of moral rectitude. His first prayer was composed in the year 1738. He had not at that time renounced the use of wine; and, no doubt, occasionally enjoyed his friend and his bottle. The love of late hours, which followed him through life, was, perhaps, originally contracted in company with Savage. However that may be, their connexion was not of long duration. In the year 1738, Savage was reduced to the last distress. Mr. Pope, in a letter to him, expressed his concern for "the miserable withdrawing of his pension after the death of the Queen;" and gave him hopes that, "in a short time, he should find himself supplied with a competence, without any dependence on those little creatures whom we are pleased to call the Great. The scheme proposed to him was, that he should retire to Swansea in Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by subscription; Pope was to pay twenty pounds. This plan, though finally established, took more than a year before it was carried into execution. In the mean time, the intended retreat of Savage called to Johnson's mind the third Satire of Juvenal in which that poet takes leave of a friend, who was withdrawing himself from all the vices of Rome. Struck with this idea, he wrote that well-known poem, called London. The first lines manifestly point to Savage.

> "Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel
> When injured Thales bids the town farewell;
> Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend,
> I praise the hermit, but regret the friend,
> Resolved at length, from Vice and London far
> To breathe in distant fields a purer air;
> And fixed on Cambria's solitary shore,
> Give to St. David one true Briton more.'

Johnson at that time lodged at Greenwich. He there fixes the scene, and takes leave of his friend; who, he says in his Life, parted from

him with tears in his eyes. The poem, when finished, was offered to Cave. It happened, however, that the late Mr. Dodsley was the purchaser, at the price of ten guineas. It was published in 1738; and Pope, we are told, said, "The author, whoever he is, will not be long concealed:" alluding to the passage in Terence, *Ubi, ubi est, diu celari non potest.* Notwithstanding that prediction, it does not appear that, besides the copy-money, any advantage accrued to the author of a poem, written with the elegance and energy of Pope. Johnson, in August 1738, went, with all the fame of his poetry, to offer himself a candidate for the mastership of the school at Appleby, in Leicestershire. The statutes of the place required, that the person chosen should be a Master of Arts. To remove this objection, the then Lord Gower was induced to write to a friend, in order to obtain for Johnson a Master's degree in the University of Dublin, by the recommendation of Dr. Swift. The letter was printed in one of the Magazines, and was as follows:

"Sir,

"Mr. Samuel Johnson (author of London, a Satire, and some other poetical pieces,) is a native of this county, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school, now vacant; the certain salary of which is sixty pounds per year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but unfortunately he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which would make him happy for life, by not being a Master of Arts, which, by the statutes of the school, the master of it must be.

"Now, these gentlemen do me the honour to think, that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift, to persuade the University of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man Master of Arts in their University. They highly extol the man's learning and probity, and will not be persuaded, that the University will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the Dean. They say he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is of so long a journey; and yet he will venture it, if the Dean thinks it necessary, choosing rather to die upon the road, than to be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

"I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than these good-natured gentlemen apprehend, especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and propensity to relieve merit in distress will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you, that I am, with great truth,

"Sir,

"Your faithful humble servant,

"Gower."

"Trentham Aug. 1st."

This scheme miscarried. There is reason to think, that Swift declined to meddle in the business; and to that circumstance Johnson's known dislike of Swift has been often imputed.

It is mortifying to pursue a man of merit through all his difficulties; and yet this narrative must be, through many following years, the history of Genius and Virtue struggling with Adversity. Having lost the school at Appleby, Johnson was thrown back on the metropolis. Bred to no profession, without relations, friends or interest, he was condemned to drudgery in the service of Cave, his only patron. In November 1738 was published a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man; "containing a succinct View of the System of the Fatalists, and a Confutation of their Opinions; with an Illustration of the Doctrine of Free-Will; and an Inquiry, what view Mr. Pope might have in touching upon the Leibnitzian Philosophy, and Fatalism. By Mr. Crousaz, Professor of Philosophy, and Mathematics at Lausanne." This translation has been generally thought a production of Johnson's pen; but it is now known, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter has acknowledged it to be one of her early performances. It is certain, however, that Johnson was eager to promote the publication. He considered the foreign philosopher as a man zealous in the cause of religion; and with him he was willing to join against the system of the Fatalists, and the doctrine of Leibnitz. It is well known that Warburton wrote a vindication of Mr. Pope, but there is reason to think that Johnson conceived an early prejudice against the Essay on Man; and what once took root in a mind like his, was not easily eradicated. His letter to Cave on this subject is still extant, and may well justify Sir John Hawkins, who inferred that Johnson was the translator of Crousaz. The conclusion of the letter is remarkable. "I am yours, Impransus." If by that Latin word was meant that he had not dined, because he wanted the means, who can read it, even at this hour, without an aching heart?

With a mind naturally vigorous, and quickened by necessity, Johnson formed a multiplicity of projects; but most of them proved abortive. A number of small tracts issued from his pen with wonderful rapidity; such as "Marmor Norfolciense; or an Essay on an ancient prophetical Inscription, in Monkish Rhyme, discovered at Lynn in Norfolk. By *Probus Britannicus.*" This was a pamphlet against Sir Robert Walpole. According to Sir John Hawkins, a warrant was issued to apprehend the Author, who retired with his wife to an obscure lodging near Lambeth Marsh, and there eluded the search of the messengers. But this story has no foundation in truth. Johnson was never known to mention such an incident in his life; and Mr. Steele (late of the Treasury) caused diligent search to be made at the proper offices, and no trace of such a proceeding could be found. In the same year (1739) the Lord Chamberlain prohibited the representation of a tragedy, called Gustavus Vasa, by Henry Brooke. Under the mask of irony, Johnson published "A Vindication of the Licenser from the malicious and scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke." Of these two pieces Sir John Hawkins says, "they have neither learning nor wit,

nor a single ray of that genius which has since blazed forth; but, as they have lately been reprinted, the reader, who wishes to gratify his curiosity, is referred to the fourteenth volume of Johnson's works, published by Stockdale. The lives of Boerhaave, Blake, Barratier, Father Paul, and others, were about that time, printed in the Gentleman's Magazine. The subscription of fifty pounds a year for Savage was completed; and in July 1739, Johnson parted with the companion of his midnight hours never to see him more. The separation was, perhaps, an advantage to him, who wanted to make a right use of his time, and even then beheld with self-reproach the waste occasioned by dissipation. His abstinence from wine and strong liquors began soon after the departure of Savage. What habits he contracted in the course of that acquaintance cannot now be known. The ambition of excelling in conversation, and that pride of victory, which, at times, disgraced a man of Johnson's genius, were, perhaps, native blemishes. A fierce spirit of independence, even in the midst of poverty, may be seen in Savage; and, if not thence transfused by Johnson into his own manners, it may, at least, be supposed to have gained strength from the example before him. During that connexion there was, if we believe Sir John Hawkins, a short separation between our author and his wife; but a reconciliation soon took place. Johnson loved her, and showed his affection in various modes of gallantry, which Garrick used to render ridiculous by his mimicry. The affectation of soft and fashionable airs did not become an unwieldy figure: his admiration was received by the wife with the flutter of an antiquated coquette; and both, it is well known, furnished matter for the lively genius of Garrick.

It is a mortifying reflection, that Johnson, with a store of learning and extraordinary talents, was not able, at the age of thirty, to force his way to the favour of the public. *Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed.* "He was still," as he says himself, "to provide for the day that was passing over him." He saw Cave involved in a state of warfare with the numerous competitors, at that time struggling with the Gentleman's Magazine; and gratitude for such supplies as Johnson received dictated a Latin Ode on the subject of that contention. The first lines,

> "Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
> Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,"

put one in mind of Casimir's Ode to Pope Urban:

> "Urbane, regum maxime, maxime
> Urbane vatum."———

The Polish poet was, probably, at that time in the hands of a man who had meditated the history of the Latin poets. Guthrie the historian had from July 1736 composed the parliamentary speeches for the Magazine; but, from the beginning of the session which opened on the 19th of November 1740, Johnson succeeded to that department, and continued it from that time to the debate on spirituous liquors, which happened in the House of Lords in February 1742-3. The eloquence, the force of argument, and the splendour of language displayed in the several speeches, are well known, and universally admired. The whole has been collected in two volumes by Mr. Stockdale, and may form a proper supplement to this edition. That Johnson was the author of the debates during that period was not generally known; but the secret transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed by himself on the following occasion: Mr. Wedderburne (now Lord Loughborough,)* Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis, (the translator of Horace,) the present writer, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate towards the end of Sir Robert Walpole's administration being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, "That Mr. Pitt's speech, on that occasion, was the best he had ever read." He added, "That he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated orator, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above-mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate; and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter-street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked, "How that speech could be written by him?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter-street. I never had been in the gallery of the House of Commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance; they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the side they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the Parliamentary Debates." To this discovery Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, Sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson; one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing, that he dealt out reason and eloquence with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well; but I took care that the whig dogs should not have the best of it." The sale of the Magazine was greatly increased by the Parliamentary Debates, which were continued by Johnson till the month of March 1742-3. From that time the Magazine was conducted by Dr. Hawkesworth.

In 1743-4, Osborne, the bookseller, who kept a shop in Gray's-Inn, purchased the Earl of Oxford's library, at the price of thirteen thousand pounds. He projected a catalogue in five octavo volumes, at five shillings each. Johnson was employed in that painful drudgery. He was likewise to collect all such small tracts as were in any degrees worth preserving in order to reprint and publish the whole in a collection

* Afterwards Earl of Roslin. He died Jan. 5 1805.

called "The Harleian Miscellany." The catalogue was completed: and the Miscellany, in 1749, was published in eight quarto volumes. In this business Johnson was a day-labourer for immediate subsistence, not unlike Gustavus Vasa working in the mines of Dalecarlia. What Wilcox, a bookseller of eminence in the Strand, said to Johnson, on his first arrival in town, was now almost confirmed. He lent our author five guineas, and then asked him, "How do you mean to earn your livelihood in this town?" "By my literary labours," was the answer. Wilcox, staring at him, shook his head: "By your literary labours!—You had better buy a porter's knot." Johnson used to tell this anecdote to Mr. Nichols; but he said, "Wilcox was one of my best friends, and he meant well." In fact, Johnson, while employed in Gray's-Inn, may be said to have carried a porter's knot. He paused occasionally to peruse the book that came to his hand. Osborne thought that such curiosity tended to nothing but delay, and objected to it with all the pride and insolence of a man who knew that he paid daily wages. In the dispute that of course ensued, Osborne, with that roughness which was natural to him, enforced his argument by giving the lie. Johnson seized a folio and knocked the bookseller down. This story has been related as an instance of Johnson's ferocity; but merit cannot always take the spurns of the unworthy with a patient spirit.*

That the history of an author must be found in his works, is, in general, a true observation; and was never more apparent than in the present narrative. Every era of Johnson's life is fixed by his writings. In 1744, he published the life of Savage; and then projected a new edition of Shakspeare. As a prelude to that design, he published, in 1745, "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Sir Thomas Hanmer's Edition;" to which were prefixed, "Proposals for a new Edition of Shakspeare," with a specimen. Of this pamphlet Warburton, in the Preface to Shakspeare, has given his opinion: "As to all those things, which have been published under the title of Essays, Remarks, Observations, &c. on Shakspeare, if you except some critical notes on *Macbeth*, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and genius, the rest are absolutely below a serious notice." But the attention of the public was not excited; there was no friend to promote a subscription; and the project died, to revive at a future day. A new undertaking, however, was soon after proposed; namely, an English Dictionary upon an enlarged plan. Several of the most opulent booksellers had meditated a work of this kind; and the agreement was soon adjusted between the parties. Emboldened by this connexion, Johnson thought of a better habitation than he had hitherto known. He had lodged with his wife in courts and alleys about the Strand; but now, for the purpose of carrying on his arduous undertaking, and to be nearer his printer and friend, Mr. Strahan, he ventured to take a house in Gough-square, Fleet-street. He was told that the Earl of Chesterfield was a friend to his undertaking; and in consequence of that intelligence, he published, in 1747, *The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language, addressed to the Right Honourable Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.* Mr. Whitehead, afterwards Poet Laureat, undertook to convey the manuscript to his Lordship: the consequence was an invitation from Lord Chesterfield to the author. A stronger contrast of characters could not be brought together; the Nobleman, celebrated for his wit, and all the graces of polite behaviour; the Author, conscious of his own merit, towering in idea above all competition, versed in scholastic logic, but a stranger to the arts of polite conversation, uncouth, vehement, and vociferous. The coalition was too unnatural. Johnson expected a Mæcenas, and was disappointed. No patronage, no assistance followed. Visits were repeated; but the reception was not cordial. Johnson one day was left a full hour, waiting in an antichamber, till a gentleman should retire, and leave his lordship at leisure. This was the famous Colley Cibber. Johnson saw him go, and fired with indignation, rushed out of the house.† What Lord Chesterfield thought of his visiter may be seen in a passage in one of that Nobleman's letters to his son.‡ "There is a man, whose moral character, deep learning, and superior parts, I acknowledge, admire, and respect; but whom it is so impossible for me to love, that I am almost in a fever whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deformed) seems made to disgrace or ridicule the common structure of the human body. His legs and arms are never in the position which, according to the situation of his body, they ought to be in, but constantly employed in committing acts of hostility upon the Graces. He throws any where, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink: and mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mis-times and mis-places every thing. He disputes with heat indiscriminately, mindless of the rank, character, and situation of those with whom he disputes. Absolutely ignorant of the several gradations of familiarity and respect, he is exactly the same to his superiors, his equals, and his inferiors; and therefore by a necessary consequence, is absurd to two of the three. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is, to consider him a respectable Hottentot." Such was the idea entertained by lord Chesterfield. After the incident of Colley Cibber, Johnson never repeated his visits. In his high and decisive tone, he has been often heard to say, "Lord Chesterfield is a Wit among Lords, and a Lord among Wits."

In the course of the year 1747, Garrick, in conjunction with Lacy, became patentee of Drury-Lane playhouse. For the opening of the theatre at the usual time, Johnson wrote for his friend the well-known prologue, which, to say no more of it, may at least be placed on a level with Pope's to the tragedy of Cato. The playhouse being now under Garrick's direction.

* Mr. Boswell says, "The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. 'Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him; but it was not in his shop, it was in my own chamber."

† Dr. Johnson denies the whole of this story. See Boswell's Life. vol. i. p. 128. Oct. edit. 1804. C.

‡ Letter CCXII.

Johnson thought the opportunity fair to think of his tragedy of Irene, which was his whole stock on his first arrival in town, in the year 1737. That play was accordingly put into rehearsal in January, 1749. As a precursor to prepare the way, and to awaken the public attention, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, a poem in imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, by the Author of *London*, was published in the same month. In the Gentleman's Magazine, for February, 1749, we find that the tragedy of *Irene* was acted at Drury-Lane, on Monday, February the 6th, and from that time, without interruption, to Monday, February, the 20th being in all thirteen nights. Since that time it has not been exhibited on any stage. *Irene* may be added to some other plays in our language, which have lost their place in the theatre, but continue to please in the closet. During the representation of this piece, Johnson attended every night behind the scenes. Conceiving that his character as an author required some ornament for his person, he chose upon that occasion to decorate himself with a handsome waistcoat, and a gold-laced hat. The late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, who had a great deal of that humour, which pleases the more for seeming undesigned, used to give a pleasant description of this green-room finery, as related by the author himself; "But," said Johnson, with great gravity, "I soon laid aside my gold-laced hat, lest it should make me proud." The amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of Irene, it is to be feared, was not very considerable, as the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the author to another dramatic attempt. Some years afterwards, when the present writer was intimate with Garrick, and knew Johnson to be in distress, he asked the manager why he did not produce another tragedy for his Litchfield friend? Garrick's answer was remarkable: "When Johnson writes *tragedy, declamation roars, and passion sleeps:* when Shakspeare wrote, he dipped his pen in his own heart."

There may, perhaps, be a degree of sameness in this regular way of tracing an author from one work to another, and the reader may feel the effect of a tedious monotony: but in the life of Johnson there are no other landmarks. He was now forty years old, and had mixed but little with the world. He followed no profession, transacted no business, and was a stranger to what is called a town life. We are now arrived at the brightest period he had hitherto known. His name broke out upon mankind with a degree of lustre that promised a triumph over all his difficulties. The Life of Savage was admired as a beautiful and instructive piece of biography. The two imitations of Juvenal were thought to rival even the excellence of Pope; and the tragedy of Irene, though uninteresting on the stage, was universally admired in the closet, for the propriety of the sentiments, the richness of the language, and the general harmony of the whole composition. His fame was widely diffused; and he had made his agreement with the booksellers for his English Dictionary at the sum of fifteen hundred guineas; a part of which was to be, from time to time, advanced in proportion to the progress of the work. This was a certain fund for his support, without being obliged to write fugitive pieces for the petty supplies of the day. Accordingly we find that, in 1749, he established a club, consisting of ten in number at Horseman's, in Ivy-Lane, on every Tuesday evening. This is the first scene of social life to which Johnson can be traced out of his own house. The members of this little society were, Samuel Johnson; Dr. Salter (father of the late Master of the Charter-House;) Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant; Mr. Payne, a bookseller, in Paternoster-row; Mr. Samuel Dyer, a learned young man; Dr. Wm. M'Ghie, a Scotch physician; Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Bathurst, another young physician; and Sir John Hawkins. This list is given by Sir John, as it should seem, with no other view than to draw a spiteful and malevolent character of almost every one of them. Mr. Dyer, whom Sir John says he loved with the affection of a brother, meets with the harshest treatment, because it was his maxim, that *to live in peace with mankind, and in a temper to do good offices, was the most essential part of our duty.* That notion of moral goodness gave umbrage to Sir John Hawkins, and drew down upon the memory of his friend the bitterest imputations. Mr. Dyer, however, was admired and loved through life. He was a man of literature. Johnson loved to enter with him into a discussion of metaphysical, moral, and critical subjects; in those conflicts, exercising his talents, and, according to his custom, always contending for victory. Dr. Bathurst was the person on whom Johnson fixed his affection. He hardly ever spoke of him without tears in his eyes. It was from him, who was a native of Jamaica, that Johnson received into his service Frank,* the black servant, whom, on account of his master, he valued to the end of his life. At the time of instituting the club in Ivy-Lane, Johnson had projected the *Rambler*. The title was most probably suggested by the *Wanderer;* a poem which he mentions with the warmest praise, in the Life of Savage. With the same spirit of independence with which he wished to live, it was now his pride to write. He communicated his plan to none of his friends; he desired no assistance, relying entirely on his own fund, and the protection of the Divine Being, which he implored in a solemn form of prayer, composed by himself for the occasion. Having formed a resolution to undertake a work that might be of use and honour to his country, he thought, with Milton, that this was not to be obtained "but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases."

Having invoked the special protection of Heaven, and by that act of piety fortified his mind, he began the great work of the *Rambler*. The first number was published on Tuesday, March the 20th, 1750; and from that time was continued regularly every Tuesday and Saturday, for the space of two years, when it finally closed, on Saturday, March 14, 1752. As it began with motives of piety, so it appears that the same religious spirit glowed with unabating ardour to the last. His conclusion is: "The Essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any

* See Gent. Mag. vol. lxxi. p. 190.

accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth." The whole number of Essays amounted to two hundred and eight. Addison's, in the Spectator, are more in number, but not half in point of quantity: Addison was not bound to publish on stated days; he could watch the ebb and flow of his genius, and send his paper to the press when his own taste was satisfied. Johnson's case was very different. He wrote singly and alone. In the whole progress of the work he did not receive more than ten essays. This was a scanty contribution. For the rest, the author has described his situation. "He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce." Of this excellent production, the number sold on each day did not amount to five hundred: of course the bookseller, who paid the author four guineas a week, did not carry on a successful trade. His generosity and perseverance deserve to be commended; and happily, when the collection appeared in volumes, were amply rewarded. Johnson lived to see his labours flourish in a tenth edition. His posterity, as an ingenious French writer has said on a similar occasion, began in his lifetime.

In the beginning of 1750, soon after the Rambler was set on foot, Johnson was induced by the arts of a vile impostor to lend his assistance, during a temporary delusion, to a fraud not to be paralleled in the annals of literature.* One Lauder, a native of Scotland, who had been a teacher in the University of Edinburgh, had conceived a mortal antipathy to the name and character of Milton. His reason was, because the prayer of Pamela, in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, was, as he supposed, maliciously inserted by the great poet in an edition of the Eikon Basilike, in order to fix an imputation of impiety on the memory of the murdered king. Fired with resentment, and willing to reap the profits of a gross imposition, this man collected from several Latin poets, such as Masenius the Jesuit, Staphorstius a Dutch divine, Beza, and others, all such passages as bore any kind of resemblance to different places in the Paradise Lost; and these he published from time to time, in the Gentleman's Magazine, with occasional interpolations of lines, which he himself translated from Milton. The public credulity swallowed all with eagerness; and Milton was supposed to be guilty of plagiarism from inferior modern writers. The fraud succeeded so well, that Lauder collected the whole into a volume, and advertised it under the title of "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns, in his Paradise Lost; dedicated to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge." While the book was in the press, the proof-sheets were shown to Johnson at the Ivy-Lane club, by Payne, the bookseller, who was one of the members. No man in that Society was in possession of the authors from whom Lauder professed to make his extracts. The charge was believed, and the contriver of it found his way to Johnson; who is represented by Sir John Hawkins, not indeed as an accomplice in the fraud, but through motives of malignity to Milton, delighting in the detection, and exulting that the poet's reputation would suffer by the discovery. More malice to a deceased friend cannot well be imagined. Hawkins adds, "that he wished well to the argument must be inferred from the preface, which indubitably was written by him." The preface, it is well known, was written by Johnson, and for that reason is inserted in this edition. But if Johnson approved of the argument, it was no longer than while he believed it founded in truth. Let us advert to his own words in that very preface. "Among the inquiries to which the ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius in the construction of his work; a view of the fabric gradually rising, perhaps from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of the first plan; to find what was projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own." These were the motives that induced Johnson to assist Lauder with a preface: and are not these the motives of a critic and a scholar? What reader of taste, what man of real knowledge, would not think his time well employed in an inquiry so curious, so interesting, and instructive? If Lauder's facts were really true, who would not be glad, without the smallest tincture of malevolence, to receive real information? It is painful to be thus obliged to vindicate a man who, in his heart, towered above the petty arts of fraud and imposition, against an injudicious biographer, who undertook to be his editor, and the protector of his memory. Another writer, Dr. Towers, in an Essay on the Life and Character of Dr. Johnson, seems to countenance this calumny. He says, "It can hardly be doubted, but that Johnson's aversion to Milton's politics was the cause of that alacrity with which he joined with Lauder in his infamous attack on our great epic poet, and which induced him to assist in that transaction." These words would seem to describe an accomplice, were they not immediately followed by an express declaration, that Johnson was *unacquainted with the imposture*. Dr. Towers adds, "It seems to have been by way of making some compensation to the memory of Milton, for the share he had in the attack of Lauder, that Johnson wrote the Prologue, spoken by Garrick, at Drury-Lane Theatre, 1750, on the performance of the Masque of Comus, for the benefit of Milton's grand

* It has since been paralleled, in the case of the Shakspeare MSS. by a yet more vile impostor.

daughter." Dr. Towers is not free from prejudice; but, as Shakspeare has it, "he begets a temperance, to give it smoothness." He is, therefore, entitled to a dispassionate answer. When Johnson wrote the prologue, it does not appear that he was aware of the malignant artifices practised by Lauder. In the postscript to Johnson's preface, a subscription is proposed, for relieving the grand-daughter of the author of Paradise Lost. Dr. Towers will agree that this shows Johnson's alacrity in doing good. That alacrity showed itself again in the letter printed in the European Magazine, January, 1785, and there said to have appeared originally in the General Advertiser, 4th April, 1750, by which the public were invited to embrace the opportunity of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. The letter adds, "to assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour. Whoever, therefore, would be thought capable of pleasure in reading the works of our incomparable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude as to refuse to lay out a trifle, in a rational and elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the consciousness of doing good, should appear at Drury-Lane Theatre, to-morrow, April 5, when COMUS will be performed for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, grand-daughter to the author, and the only surviving branch of his family. *Nota bene*, there will be a new prologue on the occasion, written by the author of Irene, and spoken by Mr. Garrick." The man who had thus exerted himself to serve the grand-daughter, cannot be supposed to have entertained personal malice to the grand-father. It is true, that the malevolence of Lauder, as well as the impostures of Archibald Bower, were fully detected by the labours, in the cause of truth, of the Rev. Dr. Douglas, the late Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

> ——"Diram qui contudit Hydram,
> Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit."

But the pamphlet, entitled, "Milton vindicated from the charge of Plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several Forgeries and gross Impositions on the Public, by John Douglas, M. A. Rector of Eaton Constantine, Salop," was not published till the year 1751. In that work, p. 77, Dr. Douglas says, "It is to be hoped, nay, it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments and inimitable style point out the author of Lauder's preface and postscript, will no longer allow A MAN to *plume himself with his feathers*, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance, an assistance which I am persuaded would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts, which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world." We have here a contemporary testimony to the integrity of Dr. Johnson throughout the whole of that vile transaction. What was the consequence of the requisition made by Dr. Douglas? Johnson, whose ruling passion may be said to be the love of truth, convinced Lauder, that it would be more for his interest to make a full confession of his guilt, than to stand forth the convicted champion of a lie; and for this purpose he drew up, in the strongest terms, a recantation, in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Douglass, which Lauder signed, and published in the year 1751. That piece will remain a lasting memorial of the abhorrence with which Johnson beheld a violation of truth. Mr. Nichols, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, showed him, in 1780, a book called "Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton," in which the affair of Lauder was renewed with virulence, and a *poetical scale* in the Literary Magazine, 1758, (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection) was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin: "In the business of Lauder I was deceived, partly by thinking the man too frantic to be fraudulent. Of the *poetical scale* quoted from the Magazine I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it." As a critic and a scholar, Johnson was willing to receive what numbers, at the time, believed to be true information: when he found that the whole was a forgery, he renounced all connexion with the author.

In March 1752, he felt a severe stroke of affliction in the death of his wife. The last number of the Rambler, as already mentioned, was on the 14th of that month. The loss of Mrs. Johnson was then approaching, and probably was the cause that put an end to those admirable periodical essays. It appears that she died on the 28th of March: in a memorandum, at the foot of the Prayers and Meditations, that is called her Dying Day. She was buried at Bromley, under the care of Dr. Hawkesworth. Johnson placed a Latin inscription on her tomb, in which he celebrated her beauty. With the singularity of his prayers for his deceased wife, from that time to the end of his days, the world is sufficiently acquainted. On Easter-day, 22d April, 1764, his memorandum says: "Thought on Tetty, poor dear Tetty; with my eyes full. Went to church. After sermon I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me." In a prayer, January 23, 1759, the day on which his mother was buried, he commends, as far as may be lawful, her soul to God, imploring for her whatever is most beneficial to her in her present state. In this habit he persevered to the end of his days. The Rev. Mr. Strahan, the editor of the Prayers and Meditations, observes, "That Johnson, on some occasions, prays that the Almighty *may have had mercy* on his wife and Mr. Thrale; evidently supposing their sentence to have been already passed in the Divine Mind; and by consequence, proving, that he had no belief in a state of purgatory, and no reason for praying for the dead that could impeach the sincerity of his profession as a Protestant." Mr. Strahan adds, "That, in praying for the regretted tenants of the grave, Johnson conformed to a practice which has been retained by many learned members of the Established Church, though the Liturgy no longer admits it. *If where the tree falleth, there it shall be;* if our state, at the close of life, is to be the measure of

our final sentence, then prayers for the dead, being visibly fruitless, can be regarded only as the vain oblations of superstition. But of all superstitions this, perhaps, is one of the least unamiable, and most incident to a good mind. If our sensations of kindness be intense, those, whom we have revered and loved, death cannot wholly seclude from our concern. It is true, for the reason just mentioned, such evidences of our surviving affection may be thought ill-judged; but surely they are generous, and some natural tenderness is due even to a superstition, which thus originates in piety and benevolence." These sentences, extracted from the Rev. Mr. Strahan's preface, if they are not a full justification, are, at least, a beautiful apology. It will not be improper to add what Johnson himself has said on the subject. Being asked by Mr. Boswell,* what he thought of purgatory as believed by the Roman Catholics? His answer was, "It is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion, that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment; nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and, therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see there is nothing unreasonable in this; and if it be once established that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life." This was Dr. Johnson's guess into futurity; and to guess is the utmost that man can do. "Shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it."

Mrs. Johnson left a daughter, Lucy Porter, by her first husband. She had contracted a friendship with Mrs. Anne Williams, the daughter of Zachary Williams, a physician of eminence in South Wales, who had devoted more than thirty years of a long life to the study of the longitude, and was thought to have made great advances towards that important discovery. His letters to Lord Halifax, and the Lords of the Admiralty, partly corrected and partly written by Dr. Johnson, are still extant in the hands of Mr. Nichols.† We there find Dr. Williams, in the eighty-third year of his age, stating, that he had prepared an instrument, which might be called an epitome or miniature of the terraqueous globe, showing, with the assistance of tables constructed by himself, the variations of the magnetic needle, and ascertaining the longitude for the safety of navigation. It appears that this scheme had been referred to Sir Isaac Newton; but that great philosopher excusing himself on account of his advanced age, all applications were useless till 1751, when the subject was referred, by order of Lord Anson, to Dr. Bradley, the celebrated professor of astronomy. His report was unfavourable,‡ though it allows that a considerable progress had been made. Dr. Williams, after all his labour and expense, died in a short time after, a melancholy instance of unrewarded merit. His daughter possessed uncommon talents, and, though blind, had an alacrity of mind that made her conversation agreeable, and even desirable. To relieve and appease melancholy reflections, Johnson took her home to his house in Gough-square. In 1755, Garrick gave her a benefit-play, which produced two hundred pounds. In 1766, she published, by subscription, a quarto volume of Miscellanies, and increased her little stock to three hundred pounds. That fund, with Johnson's protection, supported her through the remainder of her life.

During the two years in which the Rambler was carried on, the Dictionary proceeded by slow degrees. In May 1752, having composed a prayer preparatory to his return from tears and sorrow to the duties of life, he resumed his grand design, and went on with vigour, giving, however, occasional assistance to his friend Dr. Hawkesworth in the Adventurer, which began soon after the Rambler was laid aside. Some of the most valuable essays in that collection were from the pen of Johnson. The Dictionary was completed towards the end of 1754; and, Cave being then no more, it was a mortification to the author of that noble addition to our language, that his old friend did not live to see the triumph of his labours. In May 1755, that great work was published. Johnson was desirous that it should come from one who had obtained academical honours; and for that purpose his friend, the Rev. Thomas Wharton, obtained for him, in the preceding month of February, a diploma for a master's degree from the University of Oxford. Garrick, on the publication of the Dictionary, wrote the following lines;

"Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier can beat ten of France,
Would we alter the boast, from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men.
In the deep mines of science, though Frenchmen may toil, [Boyle?
Can their strength be compared to Locke, Newton, or
Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their powers,
Their versemen and prosemen, then match them with ours.
First Shakspeare and Milton, like gods in the fight
Have put their whole drama and epic to flight.
In satires, epistles, and odes would they cope?
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope.
And Johnson well arm'd, like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more."

It is, perhaps, needless to mention, that Forty was the number of the French academy, at the time when their Dictionary was published to settle their language.

In the course of the winter preceding this grand publication, the late Earl of Chesterfield gave two essays in the periodical paper called The World, dated November 28, and December 5, 1754, to prepare the public for so important a work. The original plan, addressed to his Lordship in the year 1747, is there mentioned in terms of the highest praise; and this was understood, at the time, to be a courtly way of soliciting a dedication of the Dictionary to himself. Johnson treated this civility with disdain. He said to Garrick and others, "I have sailed a long and painful voyage round the world of the English language, and does he now send out two cock-boats to tow me into harbour?" He had said, in the last number of the Rambler, that "having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication." Such a man, when he had

* Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 328. 4to edition.
† See Gentleman's Magazine for Nov. and Dec. 1787.
‡ See Gentleman's Magazine for 1787, p. 1042.

finished his Dictionary, "not," as he says himself, "in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow, and without the patronage of the Great," was not likely to be caught by the lure thrown out by Lord Chesterfield. He had in vain sought the patronage of that nobleman; and his pride, exasperated by disappointment, drew from him the following letter, dated in the month of February, 1755.

"*To the Right Hon. the Earl of* CHESTERFIELD.

"MY LORD,

"I have been lately informed, by the proprietors of The World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish, that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;* that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending. But I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward room, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

"The Shepherd in Virgil grew acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed, though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord, your Lordship's most humble,
And most obedient servant,
SAMUEL JOHNSON."

It is said, upon good authority, that Johnson once received from Lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds. It were to be wished that the secret had never transpired. It was mean to receive it, and meaner to give it. It may be imagined, that for Johnson's ferocity, as it has been called, there was some foundation in his finances; and, as his Dictionary was brought to a conclusion, that money was now to flow in upon him. The reverse was the case. For his subsistence, during the progress of the work, he had received at different times the amount of his contract; and when his receipts were produced to him at a tavern dinner, given by the booksellers, it appeared that he had been paid a hundred pounds and upwards more than his due. The author of a book, called *Lexiphanes** written by a Mr. Campbell, a Scotchman, and purser of a man of war, endeavoured to blast his laurels, but in vain. The world applauded, and Johnson never replied. "Abuse," he said, "is often of service: there is nothing so dangerous to an author as silence; his name, like a shuttlecock, must be beat backward and forward, or it falls to the ground." Lexiphanes professed to be an imitation of the pleasant manner of Lucian; but humour was not the talent of the writer of Lexiphanes. As Dryden says, "He had too much horse-play in his raillery."

It was in the summer of 1754, that the present writer became acquainted with Dr. Johnson. The cause of his first visit is related by Mrs. Piozzi nearly in the following manner: "Mr. Murphy being engaged in a periodical paper, the Gray's-Inn Journal, was at a friend's house in the country, and not being disposed to lose pleasure for business, wished to content his bookseller by some unstudied essay. He therefore took up a French *Journal Littéraire*, and translating something he liked, sent it away to town. Time, however discovered that he translated from the French a Rambler, which had been taken from the English without acknowledgment. Upon this discovery, Mr. Murphy thought it right to make his excuses to Dr. Johnson. He went next day, and found him covered with soot, like a chimney-sweeper, in a little room, as if he had been acting Lungs in the Alchymist, *making æther*. This being told by Mr. Murphy in company, 'Come, come,' said Dr. Johnson, 'the story is black enough; but it was a happy day that brought you first to my house.'" After this first visit, the author of this narrative by degrees grew intimate with Dr. Johnson. The first striking sentence, that he heard from him, was in a few days after the publication of Lord Bolingbroke's posthumous works. Mr. Garrick asked him, "If he had seen them?" "Yes, I have seen them." "What do you think of them?" "Think of them!" He made a long pause, and then replied: "Think of them! A scoundrel and a coward! A scoundrel, who spent his life in charging a gun against Christianity; and a coward, who was afraid of hearing the report of his own gun; but left half-a-crown to a hungry Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death." His mind, at this time strained and over-laboured by constant exertion,

* This work was not published until the year 1767, when Dr. Johnson's Dictionary was fully established in reputation. C.

called for an interval of repose and indolence. But indolence was the time of danger; it was then that his spirits, not employed abroad, turned with inward hostility against himself. His reflections on his own life and conduct were always severe: and, wishing to be immaculate, he destroyed his own peace by unnecessary scruples. He tells us, that when he surveyed his past life, he discovered nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of mind, very near to madness. His life, he says, from his earliest youth, was wasted in a morning bed; and his reigning sin was a general sluggishness, to which he was always inclined, and in part of his life, almost compelled, by morbid melancholy, and weariness of mind. This was his constitutional malady; derived, perhaps, from his father, who was, at times, overcast with a gloom that bordered on insanity. When to this it is added, that Johnson, about the age of twenty, drew up a description of his infirmities, for Dr. Swinfen, at that time an eminent physician in Staffordshire; and received an answer to his letter, importing, that the symptoms indicated a future privation of reason; who can wonder that he was troubled with melancholy and dejection of spirit? An apprehension of the worst calamity that can befall human nature hung over him all the rest of his life, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest. In his sixtieth year he had a mind to write the history of his melancholy; but he desisted, not knowing, whether it would not too much disturb him. In a Latin Poem, however, to which he has prefixed as a title, ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, he has left a picture of himself, drawn with as much truth, and as firm a hand, as can be seen in the portraits of Hogarth or Sir Joshua Reynolds. The learned reader will find the original Poem in this volume, and it is hoped that a translation, or rather imitation, of so curious a piece will not be improper in this place.

KNOW YOURSELF.

(AFTER REVISING AND ENLARGING THE ENGLISH LEXICON OR DICTIONARY.)

When Scaliger, whole years of labour past,
Beheld his Lexicon complete at last,
And weary of his task, with wond'ring eyes,
Saw from words piled on words a fabric rise,
He cursed the industry, inertly strong,
In creeping toil that could persist so long,
And if, enraged he cried, Heaven meant to shed
Its keenest vengeance on the guilty head,
The drudgery of words the damn'd would know,
Doom'd to write Lexicons in endless wo.*

Yes, you had cause, great Genius, to repent;
"You lost good days that might be better spent;"
You well might grudge the hours of ling'ring pain,
And view your learned labours with disdain.
To you were given the large expanded mind,
The flame of genius, and the taste refined
'Twas yours on eagle wings aloft to soar,
And amidst rolling worlds the Great First Cause explore;
To fix the eras of recorded time,
And live in every age and every clime,
Record the Chiefs, who propt their Country's cause;
Who founded Empires, and established Laws;
To learn whate'er the Sage, with virtue fraught,
Whate'er the Muse of moral wisdom taught.
These were your quarry; these to you were known
And the world's ample volume was your own.

Yet warn'd by me, ye pigmy Wits, beware,
Nor with immortal Scaliger compare.
For me, though his example strike my view
Oh! not for me his footsteps to pursue.
Whether first Nature, unpropitious, cold,
This clay compounded in a ruder mould;
Or the slow current, loitering at my heart,
No gleam of wit or fancy can impart;
Whate'er the cause, from me no numbers flow
No visions warm me, and no raptures glow.
A mind like Scaliger's, superior still,
No grief could conquer, no misfortunes chill.
Though for the maze of words his native skies
He seem'd to quit, 'twas but again to rise;
To mount once more to the bright source of day,
And view the wonders of th' ethereal way.
The love of Fame his generous bosom fired;
Each Science hail'd him, and each Muse inspired
For him the Sons of Learning trimm'd the bays,
And Nations grew harmonious in his praise.

My task perform'd, and all my labours o'er,
For me what lot has Fortune now in store?
The listless will succeeds, that worst disease,
The rack of indolence, the sluggish ease.
Care grows on care, and o'er my aching brain
Black melancholy pours her morbid train.
No kind relief, no lenitive at hand,
I seek at midnight clubs the social band.
But midnight clubs, where wit with noise conspires,
Where Comus revels, and where wine inspires,
Delight no more: I seek my lonely bed,
And call on Sleep to soothe my languid head.
But Sleep from these sad lids flies far away;
I mourn all night, and dread the coming day.
Exhausted, tired, I throw my eyes around,
To find some vacant spot on classic ground;
And soon, vain hope! I form a grand design;
Languor succeeds, and all my powers decline
If Science open not her richest vein,
Without materials all our toil is vain.
A form to rugged stone when Phidias gives,
Beneath his touch a new creation lives.
Remove his marble, and his genius dies;
With nature, then, no breathing statue vies.

What'er I plan, I feel my powers confined
By Fortune's frown and penury of mind.
I boast no knowledge glean'd with toil and strife,
That bright reward of a well-acted life.
I view myself, while Reason's feeble light
Shoots a pale glimmer through the gloom of night,
While passions, error, phantoms of the brain,
And vain opinions, fill the dark domain;
A dreary void, where fears with grief combined
Waste all within, and desolate the mind.

What then remains? Must I in slow decline
To mute inglorious ease old age resign?
Or, bold Ambition kindling in my breast,
Attempt some arduous task? Or, were it best,
Brooding o'er Lexicons to pass the day,
And in that labour drudge my life away?

Such is the picture for which Dr. Johnson sat to himself. He gives the prominent features of his character; his lassitude, his morbid melancholy, his love of fame, his dejection, his tavern parties, and his wandering reveries, *Vacuæ mala somnia mentis*, about which so much has been written; all are painted in miniature, but in vivid colours, by his own hand. His idea of writing more dictionaries was not merely said in verse. Mr. Hamilton, who was at that time an eminent printer, and well acquainted with Dr. Johnson, remembers that he engaged in a Commercial Dictionary, and, as appears by the receipts in his possession, was paid his price for several sheets; but he soon relinquished the undertaking. It is probable that he found himself

* See Scaliger's Epigram on this subject, communicated without doubt by Dr. Johnson, Gent. Mag. 1748, p. 8.

not sufficiently versed in that branch of knowledge.

He was again reduced to the expedient of short compositions for the supply of the day. The writer of this narrative has now before him a letter in Dr. Johnson's hand-writing, which shows the distress and melancholy situation of the man who had written the Rambler, and finished the great work of his Dictionary. The letter is directed to Mr. Richardson (the author of Clarissa,) and is as follows:

"Sir,

"I am obliged to entreat your assistance. I am now under an arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom I should have received the necessary help in this case, is not at home; and I am afraid of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be so good as to send me this sum, I will very gratefully repay you, and add it to all former obligations.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient,

"and most humble servant,

"Samuel Johnson."

"Gough-Square, 16 March."

In the margin of this letter there is a memorandum in these words: "March 16, 1756, Sent six guineas. Witness, Wm. Richardson." For the honour of an admired writer it is to be regretted, that we do not find a more liberal entry. To his friend in distress he sent eight shillings more than was wanted. Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his Romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes, generosity costs the writer nothing.

About this time Johnson contributed several papers to a periodical Miscellany, called "The Visitor," from motives which are highly honourable to him, a compassionate regard for the late Mr. Christopher Smart. The Criticism on Pope's Epitaphs appeared in that work. In a short time after he became a reviewer in the Literary Magazine, under the auspices of the late Mr. Newberry, a man of a projecting head, good taste, and great industry. This employment engrossed but little of Johnson's time He resigned himself to indolence, took no exercise, rose about two, and then received the visits of his friends. Authors long since forgotten, waited on him as their oracle, and he gave responses in the chair of criticism. He listened to the complaints, the schemes, and the hopes and fears, of a crowd of inferior writers, "who." he said, in the words of Roger Ascham, "lived, *men knew not how, and died obscure, men marked not when.*" He believed that he could give a better history of Grub-street than any man living. His house was filled with a succession of visitors till four or five in the evening. During the whole time he presided at his tea-table. Tea was his favourite beverage; and, when the late Jonas Hanway pronounced his anathema against the use of tea, Johnson rose in defence of his habitual practice, declaring himself "in that article a hardened sinner, who had for years diluted his meals with the infusion of that fascinating plant; whose tea-kettle had no time to cool: who with tea solaced the midnight hour, and with tea welcomed the morning."

The proposal for a new edition of Shakspeare, which had formerly miscarried, was resumed in the year 1756. The booksellers readily agreed to his terms; and subscription-tickets were issued out. For undertaking this work, money, he confessed was the inciting motive. His friends exerted themselves to promote his interest; and, in the mean time, he engaged in a new periodical production called "The Idler." The first number appeared on Saturday, April 15, 1758; and the last, April 5, 1760. The profits of this work, and the subscriptions for the new edition of Shakspeare, were the means by which he supported himself for four or five years. In 1759 was published "Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia." His translation of Lobo's voyage to Abyssinia seems to have pointed out that country for the scene of action; and *Rassila Christos*, the General of *Sultan Segued*, mentioned in that work, most probably suggested the name of the prince. The author wanted to set out on a journey to Litchfield, in order to pay the last offices of filial piety to his mother, who, at the age of ninety, was then near her dissolution; but money was necessary. Mr. Johnston, a bookseller, who has long since left off business, gave one hundred pounds for the copy. With this supply Johnson set out for Litchfield; but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23d of January, 1759.

Johnson now found it necessary to retrench his expenses. He gave up his house in Gough square. Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's-Inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner-Temple-lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature. *Magni stat nominis umbra.* Mr. Fitzherbert (the father of Lord St. Helens, the present minister at Madrid,) a man distinguished through life for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending from his chambers to send a letter into the City; but, to his great surprise, he found an author by profession without pen, ink, or paper. The late Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury, was also among those who endeavoured, by constant attention, to soothe the cares of a mind which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions. At one of the parties made at his house, Boscovich, the Jesuit, who had then lately introduced the Newtonian philosophy at Rome, and, after publishing an elegant Latin poem on the subject, was made a Fellow of the Royal Society, was one of the company invited to meet Dr. Johnson. The conversation at first was mostly in French. Johnson, though thoroughly versed in that language, and a professed admirer of Boileau and La Bruyere, did not understand its pronunciation, nor could he speak it himself with propriety. For the rest of the evening the talk was in Latin. Boscovich had a ready current flow of that flimsy phraseology with which a priest may travel through Italy, Spain, and Germany. Johnson scorned what he called colloquial barbarisms. It was his pride to speak his best. He went on, after a little practice, with as much facility as if it was his native tongue. One sentence his writer well remembers. Observing that Fontenelle at first op-

posed the Newtonian philosophy, and embraced it afterwards, his words were: *Fontenellus, ni fallor in extrem senectute, fuit transfuga ad castra Newtoniana.*

We have now travelled through that part of Dr. Johnson's life which was a perpetual struggle with difficulties. Halcyon days are now to open upon him. In the month of May 1762, his Majesty, to reward literary merit, signified his pleasure to grant to Johnson a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The Earl of Bute was minister. Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfall of Osborne the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. This writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was disclosed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended? He fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "That he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day and dine at the Mitre Tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day Lord Loughborough conducted him to the Earl of Bute. The conversation that passed was in the evening related to this writer by Dr. Johnson. He expressed his sense of his Majesty's bounty, and thought himself the more highly honoured, as the favour was not bestowed on him for having dipped his pen in faction. "No, Sir," said Lord Bute, "it is not offered to you for having dipped your pen in faction, nor with a design that you ever should." Sir John Hawkins will have it, that after this interview, Johnson was often pressed to wait on Lord Bute: but with a sullen spirit refused to comply. However that be, Johnson was never heard to utter a disrespectful word of that nobleman. The writer of this essay remembers a circumstance which may throw some light on this subject. The late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, whom Johnson loved and respected, contended for the pre-eminence of the Scotch writers; and Ferguson's book on Civil Society, then on the eve of publication, he said, would give the laurel to North Britain. "Alas! what can he do upon that subject?" said Johnson: "Aristotle, Polybius, Grotius, Puffendorf, and Burlemaqui, have reaped in that field before him." "He will treat it," said Dr. Rose, "in a new mannner." "A new manner! Buckinger had no hands, and he wrote his name with his toes at Charing-cross, for half-a-crown-a-piece; that was a new manner of writing!" Dr. Rose replied, "If that will not, satisfy you, I will name a writer, whom you must allow to be the best in the kingdom." "Who is that?" "The Earl of Bute, when he wrote an order for your pension." "There, Sir," said Johnson, "you have me in the toil: to Lord Bute I must allow whatever praise you may claim for him." Ingratitude was no part of Johnson's character.

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Being now in the possession of a regular income, Johnson left his chambers in the Temple, and once more became master of a house in Johnson's-court, Fleet-street. Dr. Levet, his friend and physician in ordinary,* paid his daily visits with assiduity; made tea all the morning, talked what he had to say, and did not expect an answer. Mrs. Williams had her apartment in the house, and entertained her benefactor with more enlarged conversation. Chemistry was part of Johnson's amusement. For this love of experimental philosophy, Sir John Hawkins thinks an apology necessary. He tells us, with great gravity, that curiosity was the only object in view; not an intention to grow suddenly rich by the philosopher's stone, or the transmutation of metals. To enlarge his circle, Johnson once more had recourse to a literary club. This was at the Turk's Head, in Gerard-street, Soho, on every Tuesday evening through the year. The members were, besides himself, the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, the late Mr. Topham Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Mr. Chamier, Sir John Hawkins, and some others. Johnson's affection for Sir Joshua was founded on a long acquaintance, and a thorough knowledge of the virtues and amiable qualities of that excellent artist. He delighted in the conversation of Mr. Burke. He met him for the first time at Mr. Garrick's, several years ago. On the next day he said, "I suppose, Murphy, you are proud of your countryman. CUM TALIS SIT UTINAM NOSTER ESSET?" From that time his constant observation was, "That a man of sense could not meet Mr. Burke by accident, under a gateway to avoid a shower, without being convinced that he was the first man in England." Johnson felt not only kindness, but zeal and ardour for his friends. He did every thing in his power to advance the reputation of Dr. Goldsmith. He loved him, though he knew his failings, and particularly the leaven of envy, which corroded the mind of that elegant writer, and made him impatient, without disguise, of the praises bestowed on any person whatever. Of this infirmity, which marked Goldsmith's character, Johnson gave a remarkable instance. It happened that he went with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Goldsmith to see the Fantoccini, which were exhibited some years ago in or near the Haymarket. They admired the curious mechanism by which the puppets were made to walk the stage, draw a chair to the table, sit down, write a letter, and perform a variety of other actions, with such dexterity, that "though Nature's journeymen made the men, they imitated humanity" to the astonishment of the spectator. The entertainment being over, the three friends retired to a tavern. Johnson and Sir Joshua talked with pleasure of what they had seen; and says Johnson, in a tone of admiration, "How the little fellow brandished his spontoon!" "There is nothing in it," replied Goldsmith, starting up with impatience; "give me a spontoon; I can do it as well myself."

Enjoying his amusements at his weekly club, and happy in a state of independence, Johnson

* See Johnson's Epitaph on him.

gained in the year 1765 another resource, which contributed more than any thing else to exempt him from the solicitudes of life. He was introduced to the late Mr. Thrale and his family. Mrs. Piozzi has related the fact, and it is therefore needless to repeat it in this place. The author of this narrative looks back to the share he had in that business with self-congratulation, since he knows the tenderness which from that time soothed Johnson's cares at Streatham, and prolonged a valuable life. The subscribers to Shakspeare began to despair of ever seeing the promised edition. To acquit himself of this obligation, he went to work unwillingly, but proceeded with vigour. In the month of October, 1765, Shakspeare was published; and, in a short time after, the University of Dublin sent over a diploma, in honourable terms, creating him a Doctor of Laws. Oxford, in eight or ten years afterwards, followed the example; and till then Johnson never assumed the title of Doctor. In 1766 his constitution seemed to be in a rapid decline; and that morbid melancholy which often clouded his understanding, came upon him with a deeper gloom than ever. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale paid him a visit in this situation, and found him on his knees, with Dr. Delap, the Rector of Lewes, in Sussex, beseeching God to continue to him the use of his understanding. Mr. Thrale took him to his house at Streatham; and Johnson from that time became a constant resident in the family. He went occasionally to the club in Gerard-street; but his head-quarters were fixed at Streatham. An apartment was fitted up for him, and the library was greatly enlarged. Parties were constantly invited from town; and Johnson was every day at an elegant table, with select and polished company. Whatever could be devised by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale to promote the happiness, and establish the health of their guest, was studiously performed from that time to the end of Mr. Thrale's life. Johnson accompanied the family in all their summer excursions to Brighthelmstone, to Wales, and to Paris. It is but justice to Mr. Thrale to say, that a more ingenuous frame of mind no man possessed. His education at Oxford gave him the habits of a gentleman; his amiable temper recommended his conversation; and the goodness of his heart made him a sincere friend. That he was the patron of Johnson is an honour to his memory.

In petty disputes with contemporary writers, or the wits of the age, Johnson was seldom entangled. A single incident of that kind may not be unworthy of notice, since it happened with a man of great celebrity in his time. A number of friends dined with Garrick on a Christmas-day. Foote was then in Ireland. It was said at table, that the modern Aristophanes (so Foote was called) had been horse-whipped by a Dublin apothecary, for mimicking him on the stage. "I wonder," said Garrick, "that any man should show so much resentment to Foote; he has a patent for such liberties; nobody ever thought it *worth his while* to quarrel with him in London." "I am glad," said Johnson, "to find that the *man is rising in the world.*" The expression was afterwards reported to Foote; who, in return, gave out, that he would produce the *Caliban of Literature* on the stage. Being informed of this design, Johnson sent word to Foote, "That the theatre being intended for the reformation of vice, he would step from the boxes on the stage, and correct him before the audience." Foote knew the intrepidity of his antagonist, and abandoned the design. No ill-will ensued. Johnson used to say, "That, for broad-faced mirth, Foote had not his equal."

Dr. Johnson's fame excited the curiosity of the King. His Majesty expressed a desire to see a man of whom extraordinary things were said. Accordingly, the librarian at Buckingham-house invited Johnson to see that elegant collection of books, at the same time giving a hint of what was intended. His Majesty entered the room; and, among other things, asked the author, "If he meant to give the world any more of his compositions?" Johnson answered, "That he thought he had written enough." "And I should think so too," replied his Majesty, "if you had not written so well."

Though Johnson thought he had written enough, his genius, even in spite of bodily sluggishness, could not lie still. In 1770 we find him entering the lists as a political writer. The flame of discord that blazed throughout the nation on the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, and the final determination of the House of Commons, that Mr. Luttrell was duly elected, by 206 votes against 1143, spread a general spirit of discontent. To allay the tumult, Dr. Johnson published The False Alarm. Mrs. Piozzi informs us, "That this pamphlet was written at her house, between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night." This celerity has appeared wonderful to many, and some have doubted the truth. It may, however, be placed within the bounds of probability. Johnson has observed that there are different methods of composition. Virgil was used to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching the exuberances, and correcting inaccuracies; and it was Pope's custom to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them. Others employ at once memory and invention, and with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only, when, in their opinion, they have completed them. This last was Johnson's method. He never took his pen in hand till he had well weighed his subject, and grasped in his mind the sentiments, the train of argument, and the arrangement of the whole. As he often thought aloud, he had, perhaps, talked it over to himself. This may account for that rapidity with which, in general, he despatched his sheets to the press, without being at the trouble of a fair copy. Whatever may be the logic or eloquence of the False Alarm, the House of Commons have since erased the resolution from the Journals. But whether they have not left materials for a future controversy, may be made a question.

In 1771, he published another tract, on the subject of Falkland islands. The design was to show the impropriety of going to war with Spain for an island thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter, and barren in summer. For this work it is apparent that materials were furnished by direction of the minister.

At the approach of the general election in

1774, he wrote a short discourse, called The Patriot; not with any visible application to Mr. Wilkes; but to teach the people to reject the leaders of opposition, who called themselves patriots. In 1775 he undertook a pamphlet of more importance, namely, Taxation no Tyranny, in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress. The scope of the argument was, that distant colonies, which had in their assemblies a legislature of their own, were, notwithstanding, liable to be taxed in a British Parliament, where they had neither peers in one house, nor representatives in the other. He was of opinion, that this country was strong enough to enforce obedience. "When an Englishman," he says, "is told that the Americans shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed." The event has shown how much he and the minister of that day were mistaken.

The Account of the Tour to the Western Islands of Scotland, which was undertaken in the autumn of 1773, in company with Mr. Boswell, was not published till some time in the year 1775. This book has been variously received; by some extolled for the elegance of the narrative, and the depth of observation on life and manners; by others, as much condemned, as a work of avowed hostility to the Scotch nation. The praise was, beyond all question, fairly deserved; and the censure, on due examination, will appear hasty and ill-founded. That Johnson entertained some prejudices against the Scotch, must not be dissembled. It is true, as Mr. Boswell says, "that he thought their success in England exceeded their proportion of real merit, and he could not but see in them that nationality which no liberal-minded Scotsman will deny." The author of these memoirs well remembers, that Johnson one day asked him, "Have you observed the difference between your own country impudence and Scotch impudence?" The answer being in the negative: "Then I will tell you," said Johnson. "The impudence of an Irishman is the impudence of a fly, that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and flutters and teazes you. The impudence of a Scotsman is the impudence of a leech, that fixes, and sucks your blood." Upon another occasion, this writer went with him into the shop of Davis the bookseller, in Russel-street, Covent-garden. Davis came running to him almost out of breath with joy: "The Scots gentleman is come, Sir; his principal wish is to see you; he is now in the back-parlour." "Well, well, I'll see the gentleman," said Johnson. He walked towards the room. Mr. Boswell was the person. This writer followed with no small curiosity. "I find," said Mr. Boswell, "that I am come to London at a bad time, when great popular prejudice has gone forth against us North Britons; but when I am talking to you, I am talking to a large and liberal mind, and you know that I cannot *help coming from Scotland.*" "Sir," said Johnson, "no more can the rest of your countrymen."*

He had other reasons that helped to alienate him from the natives of Scotland. Being a cordial well-wisher to the constitution in Church and State, he did not think that Calvin and John Knox were proper founders of a national religion. He made, however, a wide distinction between the Dissenters of Scotland and the Separatists of England. To the former he imputed no disaffection, no want of loyalty. Their soldiers and their officers had shed their blood with zeal and courage in the service of Great Britain; and the people, he used to say, were content with their own established modes of worship, without wishing, in the present age, to give any disturbance to the Church of England. This he was at all times ready to admit; and therefore declared, that whenever he found a Scotchman to whom an Englishman was as a Scotchman, that Scotchman should be as an Englishman to him. In this, surely, there was no rancour, no malevolence. The Dissenters on this side the Tweed appeared to him in a different light. Their religion, he frequently said, was too worldly, too political, too restless and ambitious. The doctrine of *cashiering* kings, and erecting on the ruins of the constitution a new form of government, which lately issued from their pulpits, he always thought was, under a calm disguise, the principle that lay lurking in their hearts. He knew that a wild democracy had overturned Kings, Lords, and Commons; and that a set of Republican Fanatics, who would not bow at the name of Jesus, had taken possession of all the livings and all the parishes in the kingdom. That those scenes of horror might never be renewed, was the ardent wish of Dr. Johnson; and though he apprehended no danger from Scotland, it is probable that his dislike of Calvinism mingled sometimes with his reflections on the natives of that country. The association of ideas could not be easily broken; but it is well known that he loved and respected many gentlemen from that part of the island. Dr. Robertson's History of Scotland, and Dr. Beattie's Essays, were subjects of his constant praise. Mr. Boswell, Dr. Rose of Chiswick, Andrew Millar, Mr. Hamilton, the printer, and the late Mr. Strahan, were among his most intimate friends. Many others might be added to the list. He scorned to enter Scotland as a spy; though Hawkins, his biographer, and the professing defender of his fame, allowed himself leave to represent him in that ignoble character. He went into Scotland, to survey men and manners. Antiquities, fossils, and minerals, were not within his province. He did not visit that country to settle the station of Roman camps, or the spot where Galgacus fought the last battle for public liberty. The people, their customs, and the progress of literature were his objects. The civilities which he received in the course of his tour have been repaid with grateful acknowledgment, and generally, with great elegance of expression. His crime is, that he found the country bare of trees, and he has stated the fact. This, Mr. Boswell, in his Tour to the Hebrides, has told us, was resented by his countrymen with anger inflamed to rancour; but he admits that there are few trees on the east side of Scotland. Mr. Pennant, in his Tour, says, that in some parts of the eastern side of the country, he saw several large plantations of pine planted by gentlemen near their

*Mr. Boswell's account of this introduction is very different from the above. See his Life of Johnson, vol. I. p. 360, 8vo. Edit. 1804

seats; and in this respect such a laudable spirit prevails, that, *in another half century* it never shall be said, "*To spy the nakedness of the land are you come.*" Johnson could not wait for that half century, and therefore mentioned things as he found them. If in any thing he has been mistaken, he has made a fair apology in the last paragraph of his book, avowing with candour, "That he may have been surprised by modes of life, and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey, and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal; and he is conscious that his thoughts on national manners are the thoughts of one who has seen but little."

The Poems of Ossian made a part of Johnson's inquiry during his residence in Scotland and the Hebrides. On his return to England, November, 1773, a storm seemed to be gathering over his head; but the cloud never burst, and the thunder never fell,—Ossian, it is well known, was presented to the public as a translation from the *Earse;* but that this was a fraud, Johnson declared without hesitation. "The *Earse*," he says, "was always oral only, and never a written language. The Welsh and the Irish were more cultivated. In *Earse* there was not in the world a single manuscript a hundred years old. Martin, who in the last century published an Account of the Western Islands, mentions *Irish*, but never *Earse* manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time. The bards could not read; if they could, they might probably have written. But the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, and, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more. If there is a manuscript from which the translation was made, in what age was it written, and where is it? If it was collected from oral recitation, it could only be in detached parts and scattered fragments; the whole is too long to be remembered. Who put it together in its present form?" For these and such like reasons, Johnson calls the whole an imposture. He adds, "The editor, or author, never could show the original, nor can it be shown by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt." This reasoning carries with it great weight. It roused the resentment of Mr. Macpherson. He sent a threatening letter to the author; and Johnson answered him in the rough phrase of stern defiance. The two heroes frowned at a distance, but never came to action.

In the year 1777, the misfortunes of Dr. Dodd excited his compassion. He wrote a speech for that unhappy man, when called up to receive judgment of death; besides two petitions, one to the King, and another to the Queen: and a sermon to be preached by Dodd to the convicts in Newgate. It may appear trifling to add, that about the same time he wrote a prologue to the comedy of "A Word to the Wise," written by Hugh Kelly. The play, some years before, had been damned by a party on the first night. It was revived for the benefit of the author's widow. Mrs. Piozzi relates, that when Johnson was rallied for these exertions, so close to one another, his answer was, "When they come to me with a dying Parson, and a dead Stay-maker, what can a man do?" We come now to the last of his literary labours. At the request of the Booksellers he undertook the Lives of the Poets. The first publication was in 1779, and the whole was completed in 1781. In a memorandum of that year he says, some time in March he finished the Lives of the Poets, which he wrote in his usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, yet working with vigour and haste. In another place, he hopes they are written in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety. That the history of so many men, who, in their different degrees, made themselves conspicuous in their time, was not written recently after their deaths, seems to be an omission that does no honour to the Republic of Letters. Their contemporaries in general looked on with calm indifference, and suffered Wit and Genius to vanish out of the world in total silence, unregarded, and unlamented. Was there no friend to pay the tribute of a tear? No just observer of life, to record the virtues of the deceased? Was even Envy silent? It seemed to have been agreed, that if an author's works survived, the history of the man was to give no moral lesson to after ages. If tradition told us that Ben Johnson went to the Devil Tavern; that Shakspeare stole deer, and held the stirrup at playhouse doors; that Dryden frequented Button's Coffee-house; curiosity was lulled asleep, and biography forgot the best part of her function, which is to instruct mankind by examples taken from the school of life. This task remained for Dr. Johnson, when years had rolled away; when the channels of information were, for the most part, choked up, and little remained besides doubtful anecdote, uncertain tradition, and vague report.

"Nunc situs informis premit et deserta Vetustas.

The value of Biography has been better understood in other ages, and in other countries Tacitus informs us, that to record the lives and characters of illustrious men was the practice of the Roman authors, in the early periods of the Republic. In France the example has been followed. Fontenelle, D'Alembert, and Monsieur Thomas have left models in this kind of composition. They have *embalmed* the dead. But it is true, that they had incitements and advantages, even at a distant day, which could not, by any diligence, be obtained by Dr. Johnson. The wits of France had ample materials. They lived in a nation of critics, who had at heart the honour done to their country by their Poets, their Heroes, and their Philosophers. They had, besides, an *Academy of Belles-Lettres*, where Genius was cultivated, refined, and encouraged. They had the tracts, the essays, and dissertations, which remain in the memoirs of the Academy, and they had the speeches of the several members, delivered at their first admission to a seat in that learned Assembly. In those speeches the new Academician did ample justice to the memory of his predecessor; and though his harangue was decorated with the colours of eloquence, and was, for that reason, called panegyric, yet being pronounced before qualified judges, who knew the talents, the conduct and morals of the deceased, the speaker could not, with propriety, wander into the regions of fic

tion. The truth was known, before it was adorned. The Academy saw the marble before the artist polished it. But this country has had no Academy of Literature. The public mind, for centuries, has been engrossed by party and faction; *by the madness of many for the gain of a few;* by civil wars, religious dissensions, trade and commerce, and the arts of accumulating wealth. Amidst such attentions, who can wonder that cold praise has been often the only reward of merit? In this country Doctor Nathaniel Hodges, who, like the good bishop of Marseilles, *drew purer breath* amidst the contagion of the plague in London, and, during the whole time, continued in the city, administering medical assistance, was suffered, as Johnson used to relate with tears in his eyes, to die for debt in a gaol. In this country, the man who brought the New River to London was ruined by that noble project; and in this country, Otway died for want on Tower Hill; Butler, the great author of Hudibras, whose name can only die with the English language, was left to languish in poverty, the particulars of his life almost unknown, and scarce a vestige of him left except his immortal poem. Had there been an Academy of Literature, the lives, at least, of those celebrated persons would have been written for the benefit of posterity. Swift, it seems, had the idea of such an institution, and proposed it to Lord Oxford; but Whig and Tory were more important objects. It is needless to dissemble that Dr. Johnson, in the Life of Roscommon, talks of the inutility of such a project. "In this country," he says, "an academy could be expected to do but little. If an Academician's place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly." To this it may be sufficient to answer, that the Royal Society has not been dissolved by sullen disgust; and the modern Academy at Somerset House has already performed much, and promises more. Unanimity is not necessary to such an assembly. On the contrary, by difference of opinions, and collision of sentiment, the cause of literature would thrive and flourish. The true principles of criticism, the secret of fine writing, the investigation of antiquities, and other interesting subjects, might occasion a clash of opinion; but in that contention, Truth would receive illustration, and the essays of the several members would supply the memoirs of the Academy. "But," says Dr. Johnson, "suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute government there is sometimes a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power, the countenance of greatness. How little this is the state of our country needs not be told. The edicts of an English Academy would probably be read by many, only that they may be sure to disobey them. The present manners of the nation would deride authority, and therefore nothing is left, but that every writer should criticise himself." This surely is not conclusive. It is by the standard of the best writers that every man settles for himself his plan of legitimate composition; and since the authority of superior genius is acknowledged, that authority, which the individual obtains, would not be lessened by an association with others of distinguished ability. It may, therefore, be inferred, that an Academy of Literature would be an establishment highly useful, and an honour to Literature. In such an institution profitable places would not be wanted. *Vatis avarus haud facile est animus;* and the minister, who shall find leisure from party and factiou to carry such a scheme into execution, will, in all probability, be respected by posterity as the Mæcenas of letters.

We now take leave of Dr. Johnson as an author. Four volumes of his Lives of the Poets were published in 1778, and the work was completed in 1781. Should Biography fall again into disuse, there will not always be a Johnson to look back through a century, and give a body of critical and moral instruction. In April 1781, he lost his friend Mr. Thrale. His own words, in his diary, will best tell that melancholy event. "On Wednesday the 11th of April, was buried my dear friend Mr. Thrale, who died on Wednesday the 4th, and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning he expired. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face, that, for fifteen years before, had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity. Farewell! may God, that delighteth in mercy, have *had* mercy on thee! I had constantly prayed for him before his death. The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself." From the close of his last work, the malady that persecuted him through life, came upon him with alarming severity, and his constitution declined apace. In 1782 his old friend *Levet* expired without warning, and without a groan. Events like these reminded Johnson of his own mortality. He continued his visits to Mrs. Thrale at Streatham, to the 7th day of October 1782, when having first composed a prayer for the happiness of a family with whom he had for many years enjoyed the pleasures and comforts of life, he removed to his own house in town. He says he was up early in the morning, and read fortuitously in the Gospel, *which was his parting use of the library.* The merit of the family is manifested by the sense he had of it, and we see his heart overflowing with gratitude. He leaves the place with regret, and *casts a lingering look behind.*

The few remaining occurrences may be soon despatched. In the month of June, 1783, Johnson had a paralytic stroke, which affected his speech only. He wrote to Dr. Taylor of Westminster; and to his friend Mr. Allen, the printer, who lived at the next door. Dr. Brocklesby arrived in a short time, and by his care, and that of Dr. Heberden, Johnson soon recovered. During his illness the writer of this narrative visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson's Chymistry. Articulating with difficulty, he said, "From this book he who knows nothing may learn a great deal; and he who knows, will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing." In the month of August he set out for Litchfield on a visit to Mrs. Lucy Porter, the

daughter of his wife by her first husband; and in his way back paid his respects to Dr. Adams at Oxford. Mrs. Williams died at his house in Bolt Court, in the month of September, during his absence. This was another shock to a mind like his, ever agitated by the thoughts of futurity. The contemplation of his own approaching end was constantly before his eyes; and the prospect of death, he declared, was terrible. For many years, when he was not disposed to enter into the conversation going forward, whoever sat near his chair, might hear him repeating from Shakspeare,

> Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
> This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods———

And from Milton,

> Who would lose,
> For fear of pain, this intellectual being?

By the death of Mrs. Williams he was left in a state of destitution, with nobody but Frank, his black servant, to soothe his anxious moments. In November 1783, he was swelled from head to foot with a dropsy. Dr. Brocklesby, with that benevolence with which he always assists his friends, paid his visits with assiduity. The medicines prescribed were so efficacious, that in a few days Johnson, while he was offering up his prayers was suddenly obliged to rise, and, in the course of the day, discharged twenty pints of water.

Johnson, being eased of his dropsy, began to entertain hopes that the vigour of his constitution was not entirely broken. For the sake of conversing with his friends, he established a conversation club, to meet on every Wednesday evening; and to serve a man whom he had known in Mr. Thrale's household for many years, the place was fixed at his house in Essex-street, near the Temple. To answer the malignant remarks of Sir John Hawkins on this subject, were a wretched waste of time. Professing to be Johnson's friend, that biographer has raised more objections to his character, than all the enemies to that excellent man. Sir John had a root of bitterness that *put rancours in the vessel of his peace.* Fielding, he says, was the inventor of a cant phrase, *Goodness of heart, which means little more than the virtue of a horse or a dog.* He should have known that kind affections are the essence of virtue: they are the will of God implanted in our nature, to aid and strengthen moral obligation; they incite to action; a sense of benevolence is no less necessary than a sense of duty. Good affections are an ornament not only to an author, but to his writings. He who shows himself upon a cold scent for opportunities to bark and snarl throughout a volume of six hundred pages, may, if he will, pretend to moralize; but Goodness of Heart, or, to use that politer phrase, the *virtue of a horse or a dog*, would redound more to his honour. But Sir John is no more: our business is with Johnson. The members of his club were respectable for their rank, their talents, and their literature. They attended with punctuality till about Midsummer 1784, when, with some appearance of health, Johnson went into Derbyshire, and thence to Litchfield. While he was in that part of the world, his friends in town were labouring for his benefit. The air of a more southern climate they thought might prolong a valuable life. But a pension of £300 a year was a slender fund for a travelling valetudinarian, and it was not then known that he had saved a moderate sum of money. Mr. Boswell and Sir Joshua Reynolds undertook to solicit the patronage of the Chancellor. With Lord Thurlow, while he was at the bar, Johnson was well acquainted. He was often heard to say, "Thurlow is a man of such vigour of mind, that I never knew I was to meet him, but—I was going to say, I was afraid, but that would not be true, for I never was afraid of any man; but I never knew that I was to meet Thurlow, but I knew I had something to encounter." The Chancellor undertook to recommend Johnson's case; but without success. To protract if possible the days of a man whom he respected, he offered to advance the sum of five hundred pounds. Being informed of this at Litchfield, Johnson wrote the following letter:

"My Lord,

"After a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your Lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians; and I was very desirous that your Lordship should be told it by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better, I should not be willing; if much worse, I should not be able to migrate. Your Lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hopes, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your Lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obliged,
most grateful, and most humble servant,
SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"*Sept.* 1784."

We have in this instance the exertion of two congenial minds: one, with a generous impulse relieving merit in distress; and the other, by gratitude and dignity of sentiment, rising to an equal elevation.

It seems, however, that greatness of mind is not confined to greatness of rank. Dr. Brocklesby was not content to assist with his medical art; he resolved to *minister* to his patient's *mind*, and *pluck from his memory the sorrow* which the

late refusal from a high quarter might occasion. To enable him to visit the south of France in pursuit of health, he offered from his own funds an annuity of one hundred pounds, payable quarterly. This was a *sweet oblivious antidote*, but it was not accepted for the reasons assigned to the Chancellor. The proposal, however, will do honour to Dr. Brocklesby, as long as liberal sentiment shall be ranked among the social virtues.

In the month of October, 1784, we find Dr. Johnson corresponding with Mr. Nichols, the intelligent compiler of the Gentleman's Magazine, and, in the languor of sickness, still desirous to contribute all in his power to the advancement of science and useful knowledge. He says, in a letter to that gentleman, dated Litchfield, October 20, that he should be glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information. He adds, "At Ashburne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow Mr. Bowyer's Life, a book so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could now and then have told you some hints worth your notice: We perhaps may talk a life over. I hope we shall be much together. You must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but I think he was a very good man. I have made very little progress in recovery. I am very weak, and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

In that languid condition he arrived, on the 16th of November, at his house in Bolt Court, there to end his days. He laboured with the dropsy and an asthma. He was attended by Dr. Heberden, Dr. Warren, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshank, the eminent surgeon. Eternity presented to his mind an awful prospect, and, with as much virtue as perhaps ever is the lot of man, he shuddered at the thought of his dissolution. His friends awakened the comfortable reflection of a well-spent life; and, as his end drew near, they had the satisfaction of seeing him composed, and even cheerful, insomuch that he was able, in the course of his restless nights, to make translations of Greek epigrams from the Anthologia; and to compose a Latin epitaph for his father, his mother, and his brother Nathaniel. He meditated, at the same time, a Latin inscription to the memory of Garrick; but his vigour was exhausted.

His love of literature was a passion that stuck to his last sand. Seven days before his death he wrote the following letter to his friend Mr. Nichols:

"Sir,

"The late learned Mr. Swinton, of Oxford, having one day remarked that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper Authors, at the request of Sir Robert Chambers, or myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you in his own hand, being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

"I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum,* that the veracity of this account may never be doubted.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

Sam. Johnson."

Dec. 6, 1784.

Mr. Swinton.

The History of the Carthaginians, Numidians, Mauritinians, Gætulians, Garamantes, Melano-Gætulians, Nigritæ, Cyrenaica, Marmarica, Regio Syrtica, Turks, Tartars, and Moguls, Indians, Chinese, Dissertation on the peopling of America, Dissertation on the In dependency of the Arabs.

The Cosmogony, and a small part of the history immediately following. By M. Sale.

To the Birth of Abraham. Chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.

History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards. By Mr. Psalmanazar.

Xenophon's Retreat. By the same.

History of the Persians, and the Constantinopolitan Empire. By Dr. Campbell.

History of the Romans. By Mr. Bower.†

On the morning of Dec. 7, Dr. Johnson requested to see Mr. Nichols. A few days before, he had borrowed some of the early volumes of the Magazine, with a professed intention to point out the pieces which he had written in that collection. The books lay on the table, with many leaves doubled down, and in particular those which contained his share in the Parliamentary Debates. Such was the goodness of Johnson's heart, that he then declared, that "those debates were the only parts of his writings which gave him any compunction: but that at the time he wrote them he had no conception that he was imposing upon the world, though they were frequently written from very slender materials, and often from none at all, the mere coinage of his own imagination." He added, "that he never wrote any part of his work with equal velocity. Three columns of the Magazine in an hour," he said, "was no uncommon effort; which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity. In one day in particular, and that not a very long one, he wrote twelve pages, more in quantity than ever he wrote at any other time, except in the Life of Savage, of which forty-eight pages in octavo were the production of one long day, including a part of the night."

In the course of the conversation he asked, whether any of the family of Faden the printer, were living. Being told that the geographer near Charing-Cross was Faden's son, he said, after a short pause, "I borrowed a guinea of his father near thirty years ago; be so good as to take this, and pay it for me."

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* It is there deposited. J. N.

† Before this authentic communication, Mr. Nichols had given, in the volume of the Gentleman's Magazine for 1781, p. 370, the following account of the Universal History. The proposals were published October 6, 1729, and the authors of the first seven volumes were,

Vol. I. Mr. Sale, translator of the Koran.—II. George Psalmanazar.—III. George Psalmanazar, Archibald Bower, Captain Shelvock, Dr. Campbell.—IV. The same as vol. III.—V. Mr. Bower.—VI. Mr. Bower, Rev. John Swinton.—VII. Mr. Swinton, Mr. Bower

Wishing to discharge every duty, and every obligation, Johnson recollected another debt of ten pounds which he had borrowed from his friend Mr. Hamilton the printer, about twenty years before. He sent the money to Mr. Hamilton, at his house in Bedford-Row, with an apology for the length of time. The Reverend Mr. Strahan was the bearer of the message, about four or five days before Johnson breathed his last.

Mr. Sastress (whom Dr. Johnson esteemed and mentioned in his will) entered the room during his illness. Dr. Johnson, as soon as he saw him, stretched forth his hand, and, in a tone of lamentation, called out, JAM MORITURUS! But the love of life was still an active principle. Feeling himself swelled with the dropsy, he conceived that by incisions in his legs, the water might be discharged. Mr. Cruikshank apprehended that a mortification might be the consequence; but, to appease a distempered fancy, he gently lanced the surface. Johnson cried out, "Deeper, deeper! I want length of life, and you are afraid of giving me pain, which I do not value."

On the 8th of December, the Reverend Mr. Strahan drew his will, by which, after a few legacies, the residue, amounting to about fifteen hundred pounds, was bequeathed to Frank, the black servant, formerly consigned to the testator by his friend Dr. Bathurst.

The history of a death-bed is painful. Mr. Strahan informs us, that the strength of religion prevailed against the infirmity of nature; and his foreboding dread of the Divine Justice subsided into a pious trust and humble hope of mercy at the Throne of Grace. On Monday the 13th day of December (the last of his existence on this side the grave,) the desire of life returned with all its former vehemence. He still imagined, that, by puncturing his legs relief might be obtained. At eight in the morning he tried the experiment, but no water followed. In an hour or two after he fell into a doze, and about seven in the evening expired without a groan.

On the 20th of the month his remains, with due solemnities, and a numerous attendance of his friends, were buried in Westminster Abbey, near the foot of Shakspeare's monument, and close to the grave of the late Mr. Garrick. The funeral service was read by his friend Dr. Taylor.

A black marble over his grave has the following inscription:

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.
obiit XIII die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV.

If we now look back, as from an eminence, to view the scenes of life, and the literary labours in which Dr. Johnson was engaged, we may be able to delineate the features of the man, and to form an estimate of his genius.

As a man, Dr. Johnson stands displayed in open daylight. Nothing remains undiscovered. Whatever he said is known; and without allowing him the usual privilege of hazarding sentiments, and advancing positions, for mere amusement, or the pleasure of discussion, Criticism has endeavoured to make him answerable for what, perhaps, he never seriously thought. His diary, which has been printed, discovers still more. We have before us the very heart of the man, with all his inward consciousness. And yet neither in the open paths of life, nor in his secret recesses, has any one vice been discovered. We see him reviewing every year of his life, and severely censuring himself for not keeping resolutions, which morbid melancholy, and other bodily infirmities, rendered impracticable. We see him for every little defect imposing on himself voluntary penance, going through the day with only one cup of tea without milk, and to the last, amidst paroxysms and remissions of illness, forming plans of study and resolutions to amend his life.* Many of his scruples may be called weaknesses; but they are the weaknesses of a good, a pious and most excellent man.

His person, it is well-known, was large and unwieldy. His nerves were affected by that disorder, for which, at two years of age, he was presented to the royal touch. His head shook, and involuntary motions made it uncertain that his legs and arms would, even at a tea-table, remain in their proper place. A person of Lord Chesterfield's delicacy might in his company be in a fever. He would sometimes of his own accord do things inconsistent with the established modes of behaviour. Sitting at table with the celebrated Mrs. Cholmondeley, who exerted herself to circulate the subscription for Shakspeare, he took hold of her hand in the middle of dinner, and held it close to his eye, wondering at the delicacy and whiteness, till with a smile she asked, "Will he give it to me again when he has done with it?" The exteriors of politeness did not belong to Johnson. Even that civility which proceeds, or ought to proceed, from the mind, was sometimes violated. His morbid melancholy had an effect on his temper; his passions were irritable; and the pride of science, as well as of a fierce, independent spirit, inflamed him on some occasions above all bounds of moderation. Though not in the shade of academic bowers, he led a scholastic life; and the habit of pronouncing decisions to his friends and visitors gave him a dictatorial manner, which was much enforced by a voice naturally loud, and often overstretched. Metaphysical discussion, moral theory, systems of religion, and anecdotes of literature, were his favourite topics. General history had little of his regard. Biography was his delight. *The proper study of mankind is man.* Sooner than hear of the Punic war, he would be rude to the person that introduced the subject.

Johnson was born a logician; one of those, to whom only books of logic are said to be of use. In consequence of his skill in that art, he loved argumentation. No man thought more profoundly, nor with such acute discernment. A fallacy could not stand before him; it was sure to be refuted by strength of reasoning, and a precision both in idea and expression almost unequalled. When he chose by apt illustration to place the argument of his adversary in a lu

* On the subject of voluntary penance, see the Rambler, No. CX.

dicrous light, one was almost inclined to think *ridicule the test of truth*. He was surprised to be told, but it was certainly true, that, with great powers of mind, wit and humour were his shining talents. T he often argued for the sake of triumph over his adversary, cannot be dissembled. Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, has been heard to tell of a friend of his, who thanked him for introducing him to Dr. Johnson, as he had been convinced, in the course of a long dispute, that an opinion, which he had embraced as a settled truth, was no better than a vulgar error. This being reported to Johnson, "Nay," said he, "do not let him be thankful, for he was right, and I was wrong." Like his uncle Andrew, in the ring at Smithfield, Johnson, in a circle of disputants, was determined *neither to be thrown nor conquered*. Notwithstanding all his piety, self-government, or the command of his passions in conversation, does not seem to have been among his attainments. Whenever he thought the contention was for superiority, he has been known to break out with violence, and even ferocity. When the fray was over, he generally softened into repentance, and, by conciliating measures, took care that no animosity should be left rankling in the breast of his antagonist. Of this defect he seems to have been conscious. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "Poor Baretti! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say a little wise. To be frank, he thinks, is to be cynical; and to be independent, is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour I am afraid he learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example." For his own intolerant and overbearing spirit he apologized by observing, that it had done some good; obscenity and impiety were repressed in his company.

It was late in life before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company. At Mr. Thrale's, he saw a constant succession of well-accomplished visitors. In that society he began to w[illegible]off the rugged points of his own character. He saw the advantages of mutual civility, and endeavoured to profit by the models before him. He aimed at what has been called by Swift the *lesser morals*, and by Cicero *minores virtutes*. His endeavour, though new and late, gave pleasure to all his acquaintance. Men were glad to see that he was willing to be communicative on equal terms and reciprocal complaisance. The time was then expected when he was to cease being what George Garrick, brother to the celebrated actor, called him the first time he heard him converse, "A TREMENDOUS COMPANION." He certainly wished to be polite, and even thought himself so; but his civility still retained something uncouth and harsh. His manners took a milder tone, but the endeavour was too palpably seen. He laboured even in trifles. He was a giant gaining a *purchase* to lift a feather.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that in the confines of virtue and great qualities there are generally vices of an opposite nature. In Dr. Johnson not one ingredient can take the name of vice. From his attainments in literature grew the pride of knowledge; and from his powers of reasoning, the love of disputation and the vainglory of superior vigour. His piety, in some instances, bordered on superstition. He was willing to believe in preternatural agency, and thought it not more strange that there should be evil spirits than evil men. Even the question about second sight held him in suspense. "Second sight," Mr. Pennant tells us, "is a power of seeing images impressed on the organs of sight by the power of fancy, or on the fancy by the disordered spirits operating on the mind. It is the faculty of seeing spectres or visions, which represent an event actually passing at a distance, or likely to happen at a future day. In 1771, a gentleman, the last who was supposed to be possessed of this faculty, had a boat at sea in a tempestuous night, and, being anxious for his freight, suddenly started up, and said his men would be drowned, for he had seen them pass before him with wet garments and dripping locks. The event corresponded with his disordered fancy. And thus," continues Mr. Pennant, "a distempered imagination, clouded with anxiety, may make an impression on the spirits; as persons, restless and troubled with indignation, see various forms and figures while they lie awake in bed." This is what Dr. Johnson was not willing to reject. He wished for some positive proof of communications with another world. His benevolence embraced the whole race of man, and yet was tinctured with particular prejudices. He was pleased with the minister in the Isle of Sky, and loved him so much that he began to wish him not a Presbyterian. To that body of Dissenters his zeal for the Established Church made him in some degree an adversary; and his attachment to a mixed and limited Monarchy led him to declare open war against what he called a sullen Republican. He would rather praise a man of Oxford than of Cambridge. He disliked a Whig, and loved a Tory. These were the shades of his character, which it has been the business of certain party-writers to represent in the darkest colours.

Since virtue, or moral goodness, consists in a just conformity of our actions to the relations in which we stand to the Supreme Being and to our fellow creatures, where shall we find a man who has been, or endeavoured to be, more diligent in the discharge of those essential duties? His first prayer was composed in 1738; he continued those fervent ejaculations of piety to the end of his life. In his Meditations we see him scrutinizing himself with severity, and aiming at perfection unattainable by man. His duty to his neighbour consisted in universal benevolence, and a constant aim at the production of happiness. Who was more sincere and steady in his friendships? It has been said that there was no real affection between him and Garrick. On the part of the latter, there might be some corrosions of jealousy. The character of PROSPERO, in the Rambler, No. 200, was, beyond all question, occasioned by Garrick's ostentatious display of furniture and Dresden china. It was surely fair to take from this incident a hint for a moral essay; and though no more was intended, Garrick, we are told, remembered it with uneasiness. He was also hurt that his Litchfield friend did not think so highly of his dramatic art as the rest of the world. The fact was, Johnson could not see the passions as they rose

and chased one another in the varied features of that expressive face; and by his own manner of reciting verses, which was wonderfully impressive, he plainly showed that he thought there was too much of artificial tone and measured cadence in the declamation of the theatre. The present writer well remembers being in conversation with Dr. Johnson near the side of the scenes during the tragedy of King Lear: when Garrick came off the stage, he said, "You two talk so loud you destroy all my feelings." "Prithee," replied Johnson, "do not talk of feelings, Punch has no feelings." This seems to have been his settled opinion; admirable as Garrick's imitation of nature always was, Johnson thought it no better than mere mimicry. Yet it is certain that he esteemed and loved Garrick; that he dwelt with pleasure on his praise; and used to declare, that he deserved his great success, because on all applications for charity he gave more than was asked. After Garrick's death he never talked of him without a tear in his eye. He offered, if Mrs. Garrick would desire it of him, to be the editor of his works and the historian of his life.* It has been mentioned, that on his death-bed he thought of writing a Latin inscription to the memory of his friend. Numbers are still living who know these facts, and still remember with gratitude the friendship which he showed to them with unaltered affection for a number of years. His humanity and gencrosity, in proportion to his slender income were unbounded. It has been truly said, that the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful, found in his house a sure retreat. A strict adherence to truth he considered as a sacred obligation, insomuch that, in relating the most minute anecdote, he would not allow himself the smallest addition to embellish his story. The late Mr. Tyers, who knew Dr. Johnson intimately, observed, "that he always talked as if he was talking upon oath."

After a long acquaintance with this excellent man, and an attentive retrospect to his whole conduct, such is the light in which he appears to the writer of this essay. The following lines of Horace may be deemed his picture in miniature.

Iracundior est paulo, minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum, rideri poseit, eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit, et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret; at est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam: at tibi amicus, at ingenium ingens,
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore.

"Your friend is passionate, perhaps unfit
For the brisk petulance of modern wit.
His hair ill-cut, his robe that awkward flows,
Or his large shoes, to raillery expose
The man you love; yet is he not possess'd
Of virtues, with which very few are bless'd?
While underneath this rude, uncouth disguise,
A genius of extensive knowledge lies."
FRANCIS' HOR. Book. i. Sat. 3.

It remains to give a review of Johnson's works; and this, it is imagined, will not be unwelcome to the reader.

Like Milton and Addison, he seems to have been fond of his Latin poetry. Those compositions show that he was an early scholar; but his verses have not the graceful ease that gave so much suavity to the poems of Addison. The translation of the Messiah labours under two disadvantages; it is first to be compared with Pope's inimitable performance, and afterwards with the Pollio of Virgil. It may appear trifling to remark, that he has made the letter *o*, in the word *Virgo*, long and short in the same line; Virgo, Virgo parit. But the translation has great merit, and some admirable lines. In the odes there is a sweet flexibility, particularly, To his worthy friend Dr. Laurence; on himself at the theatre, March 8, 1771; the Ode in the Isle of Sky; and that to Mrs. Thrale from the same place.

His English poetry is such as leaves room to think, if he had devoted himself to the Muses, that he would have been the rival of Pope. His first production in this kind was London, a poem in imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. The vices of the metropolis are placed in the room of ancient manners. The author had heated his mind with the ardour of Juvenal, and, having the skill to polish his numbers, he became a sharp accuser of the times. The Vanity of Human Wishes is an imitation of the tenth Satire of the same author. Though it is translated by Dryden, Johnson's imitation approaches nearest to the spirit of the original. The subject is taken from the Alcibiades of Plato and has an intermixture of the sentiments of Socrates concerning the object of prayers offered up to the Deity. The general proposition is, that good and evil are so little understood by mankind, that their wishes when granted are always destructive. This is exemplified in a variety of instances, such as riches, state preferment, eloquence, military glory, long life, and the advantages of form and beauty. Juvenal's conclusion is worthy of a Christian poet, and such a pen as Johnson's. "Let us," he says, "leave it to the gods to judge what is fittest for us. Man is dearer to his Creator than to himself. If we must pray for special favour, let it be for a sound mind in a sound body. Let us pray for fortitude, that we may think the labours of Hercules and all his sufferings preferable to a life of luxury and the soft repose of Sardanapalus. This is a blessing within the reach of every man; this we can give ourselves. It is virtue, and virtue only, that can make us happy." In the translation the zeal of the Christian conspired with the warmth and energy of the poet; but Juvenal is not eclipsed. For the various characters in the original, the reader is pleased, in the English poem, to meet with Cardinal Wolsey, Buckingham stabbed by Felton, Lord Strafford, Clarendon, Charles XII. of Sweden; and for Tully and Demosthenes, Lydiat, Galileo, and Archbishop Laud. It is owing to Johnson's delight in biography that the name of Lydiat is called forth from obscurity. It may, therefore, not be useless to tell, that Lydiat was a learned divine and mathematician in the beginning of the last century. He attacked the doctrine of Aristotle and Scaliger, and wrote a number of sermons on the harmony of the Evangelists. With all his merit, he lay in the prison of *Bocardo* at Oxford, till Bishop Usher, Laud, and others paid his debts. He petitioned Charles

*It is to be regretted that he was not encouraged in this undertaking. The assistance, however, which he gave to Davies, in writing the Life of Garrick, has been acknowledged in general terms by that writer, and from the evidence of style, appears to have been very considerable. C.

I. to be sent to Ethiopia to procure manuscripts. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the Puritans, and twice carried away a prisoner from his rectory. He died very poor in 1646.

The tragedy of Irene is founded on a passage in Knolles' History of the Turks; an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the Life of Mahomet the Great, first Emperor of the Turks, is the hinge on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this. In 1453 Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the Prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the Janizaries formed a conspiracy to dethrone the Emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of the grandees, "catching with one hand," as Knolles relates it, "the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terror of them all; and, having so done, said unto them, Now, by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not." The story is simple, and it remained for the author to amplify it with proper episodes, and give it complication and variety. The catastrophe is changed, and horror gives place to terror and pity. But, after all, the fable is cold and languid. There is not, throughout the piece, a single situation to excite curiosity, and raise a conflict of passions. The diction is nervous, rich, and elegant; but splendid language, and melodious numbers, will make a fine poem, not a tragedy. The sentiments are beautiful, always happily expressed, but seldom appropriated to the character, and generally too philosophic. What Johnson has said of the tragedy of Cato may be applied to Irene: "It is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections. Nothing excites or assuages emotion. The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing, nor what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say. It is unaffecting elegance, and chill philosophy." The following speech, in the mouth of a Turk, who is supposed to have heard of the British constitution, has been often selected from the numberless beauties with which Irene abounds:

> "If there be any land, as fame reports
> Where common laws restrain the prince and subject;
> A happy land, where circulating power
> Flows through each member of th' embodied state;
> Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
> Her grateful sons shine bright with every virtue;
> Untainted with the lust of Innovation;
> Sure all unite to hold her league of rule,
> Unbroken as the sacred chain of nature,
> That links the jarring elements in peace."

These are British sentiments. Above forty years ago they found an echo in the breast of applauding audiences; and to this hour they are the voice of the people, in defiance of the *metaphysics* and the *new lights* of certain politicians, who would gladly find their private advantage in the disasters of their country; a race of men, *quibus nulla ex honesto spes.*

The prologue to Irene is written with elegance, and, in a peculiar style, shows the literary pride and lofty spirit of the author. The epilogue, we are told in a late publication was written by Sir William Young. This is a new discovery, but by no means probable. When the appendages to a dramatic performance are not assigned to a friend, or an unknown hand, or a person of fashion, they are always supposed to be written by the author of the play. It is to be wished, however, that the epilogue in question could be transferred to any other writer. It is the worst *jeu d'esprit* that ever fell from Johnson's pen.*

An account of the various pieces contained in this edition, such as miscellaneous tracts, and philological dissertations, would lead beyond the intended limits of this essay. It will suffice to say, that they are the productions of a man who never wanted decorations of language, and always taught his readers to think. The life of the late king of Prussia, as far as it extends, is a model of the biographical style. The review of the Origin of Evil was, perhaps, written with asperity; but the angry epitaph which it provoked from Soame Jenyns, was an ill-timed resentment, unworthy of the genius of that amiable author.

The Rambler may be considered as Johnson's great work. It was the basis of that high reputation which went on increasing to the end of his days. The circulation of those periodical essays was not, at first equal to their merit. They had not, like the Spectators, the art of charming by variety; and indeed how could it be expected? The wits of Queen Anne's reign sent their contributions to the Spectator; and Johnson stood alone. "A stage-coach," says Sir Richard Steele, "must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not." So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners are acute and instructive; and the papers, professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain-head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprang. Of this uniformity Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and by consequence more agreeable to the generality of readers. This he used to illustrate by repeating two beautiful stanzas from his own Ode to Cave, or *Sylvanus Urban;*

> Non ulla Musis pagina gratior,
> Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
> Novit, fatigatamque nugis
> Utilibus recreare mentem.
>
> Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
> Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
> Immista, sic Iris refulget
> Æthereis variata fucis.

* Dr. Johnson informed Mr. Boswell that this epilogue was written by Sir William Young. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 166—70. 8vo. edit. 1804. The internal evidence that it is not Johnson's, is very strong, particularly in the line "But how the devil," &c.

It is remarkable that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought that the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or at least would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known that he praised in Cowley the easy and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and Sir William Temple, followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, *He is the Raphael of Essay Writers.* How he differed so widely from such elegant models is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly Sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is, "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." but he forgot the observation of Dryden: *If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.* There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had what Locke calls a round-about view of his subject; and though he was never tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an ORIGINAL THINKER. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, *quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret.* Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was *born to write, converse, and live with ease;* and he found an early patron in Lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his mind. His Latin poetry shows, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties of the Roman classics; and when he cultivated his native language, no wonder that he formed that graceful style, which has been so justly admired; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet never overwrought; rich in allusion, yet pure and perspicuous; correct, without labour; and though sometimes deficient in strength, yet always musical. His essays, in general, are on the surface of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of humour. Sir Roger de Coverly, and the Tory Fox-hunter, need not to be mentioned. Johnson had a fund of humour, but he did not know it: nor was he willing to descend to the familiar idiom and the variety of diction which that mode of composition required. The letter, in the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl that wants a place, will illustrate this observation. Addison possessed an unclouded imagination, alive to the first objects of nature and of art. He reaches the sublime without any apparent effort. When he tells us, "If we consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; if we still discover new firmaments and new lights that are sunk further in those unfathomable depths of æther, we are lost in a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnificence and immensity of nature;" the ease with which this passage rises to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm that captivates the reader. Johnson is always lofty; he seems, to use Dryden's phrase, to be o'er-informed with meaning, and his words do not appear to himself adequate to his conception. He moves in state, and his periods are always harmonious. His Oriental Tales are in the true style of Eastern magnificence, and yet none of them are so much admired as the Visions of Mirza. In matters of criticism, Johnson is never the echo of preceding writers. He thinks and decides for himself. If we except the Essays on the Pleasures of Imagination, Addison cannot be called a philosophical critic. His moral Essays are beautiful: but in that province nothing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson used to say, that the Essay on *The burthens of mankind* (in the Spectator No. 558) was the most exquisite he had ever read. Talking of himself, Johnson said, "Topham Beauclerk has wit, and every thing comes from him with ease; but when I say a good thing I seem to labour." When we compare him with Addison, the contrast is still stronger. Addison lends grace and ornament to truth: Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty. Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty; Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splendid robes, not labouring at the plough. Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus:

"Vultu, quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

Johnson is Jupiter tonans: he darts his lightning, and rolls his thunder, in the cause of virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of ideas; he pours along, familiarizing the terms of philosophy, with bold inversions, and sonorous periods; but we may apply to him what Pope has said of Homer: "It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it; like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense."

It is not the design of this comparison to decide between these two eminent writers. In matters of taste every reader will choose for himself. Johnson is always profound, and of course gives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms while he instructs; and writing, as he always does, a pure, an elegant and idiomatic style, he may be pronounced the safest model for imitation.

The essays written by Johnson in the Adventurer may be called a continuation of the Rambler. The Idler, in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and unlaboured elegance. It is the Odyssey after the Illiad. In-

tense thinking would not become the Idler. The first number presents a well-drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertisement in the beginning of the first volume informs us, that twelve entire essays were a contribution from different hands. One of these, No. 33, is the journal of a Senior Fellow at Cambridge, but as Johnson, being himself an original thinker, always revolted from servile imitation, he has printed the piece, with an apology, importing that the journal of a citizen in the *Spectator* almost precluded the attempt of any subsequent writer. This account of the Idler may be closed, after observing, that the author's mother, being buried on the 23d of January, 1759, there is an admirable paper occasioned by that event, on Saturday the 27th of the same month, No. 41. The reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another fine paper in the Rambler, No. 54, on the conviction that rushes on the mind at the bed of a dying friend.

"Rasselas," says Sir John Hawkins, "is a specimen of our language scarcely to be paralleled; it is written in a style refined to a degree of *immaculate purity*, and displays the whole force of *turgid* eloquence." One cannot but smile at this encomium. Rasselas is undoubtedly both elegant and sublime. It is a view of human life, displayed, it must be owned, in gloomy colours. The author's natural melancholy, depressed, at the time, by the approaching dissolution of his mother, darkened the picture. A tale, that should keep curiosity awake by the artifice of unexpected incidents, was not the design of a mind pregnant with better things. He, who reads the heads of the chapters will find, that it is not a course of adventures that invites him forward, but a discussion of interesting questions; Reflections on Human life, the History of *Imlac*, the Man of Learning; a Dissertation upon Poetry; the Character of a wise and happy Man, who discourses with energy on the government of the passions, and on a sudden, when Death deprives him of his daughter, forgets all his maxims of wisdom and the eloquence that adorned them, yielding to the stroke of affliction with all the vehemence of the bitterest anguish. It is by pictures of life, and profound moral reflection, that expectation is engaged and gratified throughout the work. The History of the Mad Astronomer, who imagines that, for five years, he possessed the regulation of the weather, and that the sun passed from tropic to tropic by his direction, represents in striking colours the sad effect of a distempered imagination. It becomes the more affecting when we recollect that it proceeds from one who lived in fear of the same dreadful visitation; from one who says emphatically, "Of the uncertainties in our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason." The inquiry into the cause of madness, and the dangerous prevalence of imagination, till in time some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, and the mind recurs constantly to the favourite conception, is carried on in a strain of acute observation; but it leaves us room to think that the author was transcribing from his own apprehensions. The discourse on the nature of the soul gives us all that philosophy knows, not without a tincture of superstition. It is remarkable that the vanity of human pursuits was, about the same time, the subject that employed both Johnson and Voltaire: but *Candide* is the work of a lively imagination; and Rasselas, with all its splendour of eloquence, exhibits a gloomy picture. It should, however, be remembered, that the world has known the weeping as well as the laughing philosopher.

The Dictionary does not properly fall within the province of this essay. The preface, however, will be found in this edition. He who reads the close of it, without acknowledging the force of the pathetic and sublime, must have more insensibility in his composition than usually falls to the share of a man. The work itself, though in some instances abuse has been loud, and in others malice has endeavoured to undermine its fame, still remains the MOUNT ATLAS of English Literature.

> Though storms and tempests thunder on its brow,
> And oceans break their billows at its feet,
> It stands unmoved, and glories in its height.

That Johnson was eminently qualified for the office of a commentator on Shakspeare, no man can doubt; but it was an office which he never cordially embraced. The public expected more than he had diligence to perform; and yet his edition has been the ground on which every subsequent commentator has chosen to build. One note for its singularity, may be thought worthy of notice in this place. Hamlet says; "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a God-kissing-carrion." In this Warburton discovered the *origin of evil*. Hamlet, he says, breaks off in the middle of the sentence; but the learned commentator knows what he was going to say, and being unwilling to keep the secret, he goes on in a train of philosophical reasoning that leaves the reader in astonishment. Johnson, with true piety, adopts the fanciful hypothesis, declaring it to be a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. The general observations at the end of the several plays, and the preface will be found in this edition. The former, with great elegance and precision, give a summary view of each drama. The preface is a tract of great erudition and philosophical criticism.

Johnson's political pamphlets, whatever was his motive for writing them, whether gratitude for his pension, or the solicitation of men in power, did not support the cause for which they were undertaken. They are written in a style truly harmonious, and with his usual dignity of language. When it is said that he advanced positions repugnant to the *common rights of mankind*, the virulence of party may be suspected. It is, perhaps, true that in the clamour raised throughout the kingdom, Johnson over-heated his mind; but he was a friend to the rights of man, and he was greatly superior to the littleness of spirit that might incline him to advance what he did not think and firmly believe. In the *False Alarm*, though many of the most eminent men in the kingdom concurred in petitions to the throne, yet Johnson, having well surveyed the mass of the people, has given, with great humour, and no less truth, what may be called, *the birth, parentage,*

and education of a remonstrance. On the subject of Falkland's Islands, the fine dissuasive from too hastily involving the world in the calamities of war, must extort applause even from the party that wished, at that time, for the scenes of tumult and commotion. It was in the same pamphlet that Johnson offered battle to JUNIUS; a writer, who, by the uncommon elegance of his style, charmed every reader, though his object was to inflame the nation in favour of a faction. Junius fought in the dark; he saw his enemy and had his full blow; while he himself remained safe in obscurity. But let us not, said Johnson, mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow. The keen invective which he published on that occasion, promised a paper war between two combatants, who knew the use of their weapons. A battle between them was as eagerly expected as between Mendoza and Big Ben. But Junius, whatever was his reason, never returned to the field. He laid down his arms, and has, ever since, remained as secret as the *man in the mask* in Voltaire's History.

The account of his journey to the Hebrides, or Western Isles of Scotland, is a model for such as shall hereafter relate their travels. The author did not visit that part of the world in the character of an Antiquary, to amuse us with wonders taken from the dark and fabulous ages; nor as a Mathematician, to measure a degree, and settle the longitude and latitude of the several islands. Those, who expected such information, expected what was never intended. *In every work regard the writer's end.* Johnson went to see men and manners, modes of life, and the progress of civilization. His remarks are so artfully blended with the rapidity and elegance of his narrative, that the reader is inclined to wish, as Johnson did with regard to Gray, that *to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment.*

As to Johnson's Parliamentary Debates, nothing with propriety can be said in this place. They are collected in two volumes by Mr. Stockdale, and the flow of eloquence which runs through the several speeches is sufficiently known.

It will not be useless to mention two more volumes, which may form a proper supplement to this edition. They contain a set of Sermons left for publication by John Taylor, LL. D. The Reverend Mr. Hayes, who ushered these Discourses into the world, has not given them as the composition of Dr. Taylor. All he could say for his departed friend was, that he left them in silence among his papers. Mr. Hayes knew them to be the production of a superior mind; and the writer of these Memoirs owes it to the candour of that elegant scholar, that he is now warranted to give an additional proof of Johnson's ardour in the cause of piety, and every moral duty. The last discourse in the collection was intended to be delivered by Dr. Taylor at the funeral of Johnson's wife; but that reverend gentleman declined the office, because, as he told Mr. Hayes, the praise of the deceased was too much amplified. He, who reads the piece, will find it a beautiful moral lesson, written with temper, and no where over-charged with ambitious ornaments. The rest of the Discourses were the fund, which Dr. Taylor, from time to time carried with him to his pulpit. He had the largest Bull* in England, and some of the best Sermons.

We now come to the Lives of the Poets, a work undertaken at the age of seventy, yet the most brilliant, and certainly the most popular, of all our Author's writings. For this performance he needed little preparation. Attentive always to the history of letters, and by his own natural bias fond of biography, he was the more willing to embrace the proposition of the Booksellers. He was versed in the whole body of English Poetry, and his rules of criticism were settled with precision. The dissertation, in the Life of Cowley, on the metaphysical Poets of the last century, has the attraction of novelty as well as sound observation. The writers who followed Dr. Donne, went in quest of something better than truth and nature. As Sancho says in Don Quixote, they wanted better bread than is made with wheat. They took pains to bewilder themselves, and were ingenious for no other purpose than to err. In Johnson's review of Cowley's works, false wit is detected in all its shapes, and the Gothic taste for glittering conceits, and far-fetched allusions, is exploded, never, it is hoped, to revive again.

An author who has published his observations on the Life and Writings of Dr. Johnson, speaking of the Lives of the Poets, says, "These compositions abounding in strong and acute remark, and with many fine and even sublime passages, have unquestionably great merit; but if they be regarded merely as containing narrations of the lives, delineations of the characters, and strictures of the several authors, they are far from being always to be depended on." He adds, "The characters are sometimes partial, and there is sometimes too much malignity of misrepresentation, to which, perhaps, may be joined no inconsiderable portion of erroneous criticism." The several clauses of this censure deserve to be answered as fully as the limits of this essay will permit.

In the first place, the facts are related upon the best intelligence, and the best vouchers that could be gleaned, after a great lapse of time. Probability was to be inferred from such materials as could be procured, and no man better understood the nature of historical evidence than Dr. Johnson; no man was more religiously an observer of truth. If his History is any where defective, it must be imputed to the want of better information, and the errors of uncertain tradition.

Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura.

If the strictures on the works of the various authors are not always satisfactory, and if erroneous criticism may sometimes be suspected, who can hope that in matters of taste all shall agree? The instances in which the public mind has differed from the positions advanced by the author, are few in number. It has been said, that justice has not been done to Swift, that Gay and Prior are undervalued; and that Gray has been harshly treated. This charge, perhaps, ought not to be disputed. Johnson, it is well known had conceived a prejudice against

* See Johnson's Letters from Ashbourne, in this edition.

Swift. His friends trembled for him when he was writing that life: but were pleased, at last, to see it executed with temper and moderation. As to Prior, it is probable that he gave his real opinion, but an opinion that will not be adopted by men of lively fancy. With regard to Gray, when he condemns the apostrophe, in which Father Thames is desired to tell who drives the hoop, or tosses the ball, and then adds, that Father Thames had no better means of knowing than himself; when he compares the abrupt beginning of the first stanza of the Bard to the ballad of Johnny Armstrong, "*Is there ever a man in all Scotland;*" there are, perhaps, few friends of Johnson, who would not wish to blot out both the passages. It may be questioned whether the remarks on Pope's Essay on Man can be received without great caution. It has been already mentioned, that Crousaz, a professor in Switzerland, eminent for his Treatise of Logic, started up a professed enemy to that poem. Johnson says, "his mind was one of those, in which philosophy and piety are happily united. He looked with distrust upon all metaphysical systems of theology, and was persuaded, that the positions of Pope were intended to draw mankind away from Revelation, and to represent the whole course of things as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality." This is not the place for a controversy about the Leibnitzian system. Warburton with all the powers of his large and comprehensive mind, published a Vindication of Pope; and yet Johnson says, that "in many passages a religious eye may easily discover expressions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty." This sentence is severe, and, perhaps dogmatical. Crousaz wrote an Examen of The Essay on Man, and afterwards a Commentary on every remarkable passage; and though it now appears that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter translated the foreign Critic, yet it is certain that Johnson encouraged the work, and, perhaps, imbibed those early prejudices which adhered to him to the end of his life. He shuddered at the idea of irreligion. Hence we are told in the Life of Pope, "never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of sentiment so happily disguised; Pope, in the chair of wisdom tells much that every man knows, and much that he did not know himself; and gives us comfort in the position, that *though man's a fool, yet God is wise;* that human advantages are unstable; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own, and that happiness is always in our power. The reader, when he meets all this in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse." But may it not be said, that every system of ethics must or ought to terminate in plain and general maxims for the use of life? and, though in such axioms no discovery is made, does not the beauty of the moral theory consist in the premises, and the chain of reasoning that leads to the conclusion? May not truth, as Johnson himself says, be conveyed to the mind by a new train of intermediate images? Pope's doctrine about the ruling passion does not seem to be refuted, though it is called, in harsh terms, pernicious as well as false, tending to establish a kind of moral predestination, or over-ruling principle, which cannot be resisted. But Johnson was too easily alarmed in the cause of religion. Organized as the human race is, individuals have different inlets of perception, different powers of mind, and different sensations of pleasure and pain.

> All spread their charms, but charms not all alike,
> On different senses different objects strike:
> Hence different passions more or less inflame,
> As strong or weak the organs of the frame,
> And hence one master-passion in the breast,
> Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

Brumoy says, Pascal from his infancy felt himself a geometrician; and Vandyke, in like manner, was a painter. Shakspeare, who of all poets, had the deepest insight into human nature, was aware of a prevailing bias in the operations of every mind. By him we are told, "Masterless passion sways us to the mood of what it likes or loathes."

It remains to inquire whether in the lives before us the characters are partial, and too often drawn with malignity of misrepresentation. To prove this it is alleged, that Johnson has misrepresented the circumstance relative to the translation of the first Iliad, and maliciously ascribed that performance to Addison, instead of Tickell, with too much reliance on the testimony of Pope, taken from the account in the papers left by Mr. Spence. For a refutation of the fallacy imputed to Addison, we are referred to a note in the Biographia Britannica, written by the late Judge Blackstone, who, it is said, examined the whole matter with accuracy, and found that the first regular statement of the accusation against Addison was published by Ruffhead, in his Life of Pope, from the materials which he received from Dr. Warburton. But with all due deference to the learned Judge, whose talents deserve all praise, this account is by no means accurate.

Sir Richard Steele, in a dedication of the Comedy of the Drummer to Mr. Congreve, gave the first insight into that business. He says, in a style of anger and resentment, "If that gentleman (Mr. Tickell) thinks himself injured, I will allow I have wronged him upon this issue, that (if the reputed translator of the first book of Homer shall please to give us another book) there shall appear another good judge of poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it." The authority of Steele outweighs all opinions founded on vain conjecture, and, indeed, seems to be decisive, since we do not find that Tickell, though warmly pressed, thought proper to vindicate himself.

But the grand proof of Johnson's malignity is the manner in which he has treated the character and conduct of Milton. To enforce this charge has wearied sophistry, and exhausted the invention of a party. What they cannot deny, they palliate; what they cannot prove, they say is probable. But why all this rage against Dr. Johnson? Addison, before him, had said of Milton:

> Oh! had the Poet ne'er profaned his pen,
> To varnish o'er the guilt of faithless men!

And had not Johnson an equal right to avow his sentiments? Do his enemies claim a privilege to abuse whatever is valuable to Englishmen, either in Church or State? and must the liberty of UN-

LICENSED PRINTING be denied to the friends of the British constitution?

It is unnecessary to pursue the argument through all its artifices, since, dismantled of ornament and seducing language, the plain truth may be stated in a narrow compass. Johnson knew that Milton was a republican; he says, "an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than that a popular government was the most frugal; for, the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." Johnson knew that Milton talked aloud "of the danger of RE-ADMITTING KINGSHIP in this nation;" and when Milton adds, "that a commonwealth was commended, or rather enjoined, by our Saviour himself, to all Christians, not without a remarkable disallowance, and the brand of Gentilism UPON KINGSHIP," Johnson thought him no better than a wild enthusiast. He knew as well as Milton, "that the happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in a full and free council of their own electing, where no single person but reason only sways;" but the example of all the republics, recorded in the annals of mankind, gave him no room to hope that REASON only would be heard. He knew that the republican form of government, having little or no complication, and no consonance of parts, by a nice mechanism forming a regular whole, was too simple to be beautiful even in theory. In practice, it perhaps never existed. In its most flourishing state, at Athens, Rome, and Carthage, it was a constant scene of tumult and commotion. From the mischiefs of a wild democracy, the progress has ever been to the dominion of an aristocracy: and the word *aristocracy* fatally includes the boldest and most turbulent citizens, who rise by their crimes, and call themselves the best men in the state. By intrigue, by cabal, and faction, a pernicious oligarchy is sure to succeed, and end at last in the tyranny of a single ruler. Tacitus, the great master of political wisdom, saw, under the mixed authority of king, nobles, and people, a better form of government than Milton's boasted republic; and what Tacitus admired in theory, but despaired of enjoying, Johnson saw established in this country. He knew that it had been overturned by the rage of frantic men; but he knew that, after the iron rod of Cromwell's usurpation, the constitution was once more restored to its first principles. Monarchy was established, and this country was regenerated. It was regenerated a second time at the Revolution: the rights of men were then defined, and the blessings of good order and civil liberty have been ever since diffused through the whole community

The peace and happiness of society were what Dr. Johnson had at heart. He knew that Milton called his defence of the Regicides a defence of the people of England, but, however glossed and varnished, he thought it an apology for murder. Had the men, who, under a show of liberty, brought their king to the scaffold, proved by their subsequent conduct, that the public good inspired their actions, the end might have given some sanction to the means; but usurpation and slavery followed. Milton undertook the office of secretary under the despotic power of Cromwell, offering the incense of adulation to his master, with the titles of *Director of public Councils, the Leader of unconquered Armies, the Father of his Country.* Milton declared at the same time, that *nothing is more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason, than that the highest mind should have the sovereign power.* In this strain of servile flattery Milton gives us the right divine of tyrants. But it seems, in the same piece, he exhorts Cromwell "not to desert those great principles of liberty which he had professed to espouse; for, it would be a grievous enormity, if, after having successfully opposed tyranny, he should himself act the part of a tyrant, and betray the cause that he had defended." This desertion of every honest principle the advocate for liberty lived to see. Cromwell acted the tyrant; and with vile hypocrisy, told the people, that he had consulted the Lord, and the Lord would have it so. Milton took an underpart in the tragedy. Did that become the defender of the people of England? Brutus saw his country enslaved; he struck the blow for freedom, and he died with honour in the cause. Had he lived to be a secretary under Tiberius, what would now be said of his memory?

But still, it seems, the prostitution with which Milton is charged, since it cannot be defended, is to be retorted on the character of Johnson. For this purpose a book has been published, called *Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton; to which are added Milton's Tractate of Education, and Areopagitica.* In this laboured tract we are told, "There is one performance ascribed to the pen of the Doctor, where the prostitution is of so singular a nature, that it would be difficult to select an adequate motive for it out of the mountainous heap of conjectural causes of human passions or human caprice. It is the speech of the late unhappy Dr. William Dodd, when he was about to hear the sentence of the law pronounced upon him, in consequence of an indictment for forgery. The voice of the public has given the honour of manufacturing this speech to Dr. Johnson; and the style and figuration of the speech itself confirm the imputation. But it is hardly possible to divine what could be his motive for accepting the office. A man, to express the precise state of mind of another, about to be destined to an ignominious death for a capital crime, should, one would imagine, have some consciousness, that he himself had incurred some guilt of the same kind." In all the schools of sophistry is there to be found so vile an argument? In the purlieus of Grub-street is there such another mouthful of dirt? In the whole quiver of malice is there so envenomed a shaft?

After this it is to be hoped, that a certain class of men will talk no more of Johnson's malignity. The last apology for Milton is that he acted according to his principles. But Johnson thought those principles detestable; pernicious to the constitution in Church and State, destructive of the peace of society, and hostile to the great fabric of civil policy, which the wisdom of ages has taught every Briton to revere, to love and cherish. He reckoned Milton in that class of men of whom the Roman historian says, when they want, by a sudden convulsion, to overturn the government, they roar and clamour for liberty; if they succeed, they destroy liberty itself. *Ut imperium evertant, libertatem præfe-*

runt; si perverterint, libertatem ipsam aggredientur. Such were the sentiments of Dr. Johnson; and it may be asked, in the language of Bolingbroke, "Are these sentiments, which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circumstances, in any situation, ought to be ashamed or afraid to avow?" Johnson has done ample justice to Milton's poetry: the Criticism on Paradise Lost is a sublime composition. Had he thought the author as good and pious a citizen as Dr. Watts, he would have been ready, notwithstanding his non-conformity, to do equal honour to the memory of the man.

It is now time to close this Essay, which the author fears has been drawn too much into length. In the progress of the work, feeble as it may be, he thought himself performing the last human office to the memory of a friend, whom he loved, esteemed, and honoured.

> His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
> Munere.——

The author of these Memoirs has been anxious to give the features of the man, and the true character of the author. He has not suffered the hand of partiality to colour his excellencies with too much warmth; nor has he endeavoured to throw his singularities too much into the shade. Dr. Johnson's failings may well be forgiven for the sake of his virtues. His defects were spots in the sun. His piety, his kind affections, and the goodness of his heart, present an example worthy of imitation. His works still remain a monument of genius and of learning. Had he written nothing but what is contained in this edition, the quantity shows a life spent in study and meditation. If to this be added the labour of his Dictionary and other various productions, it may be fairly allowed, as he used to say of himself, that he has written his share. In the volumes here presented to the public, the reader will find a perpetual source of pleasure and instruction. With due precautions authors may learn to grace their style with elegance, harmony, and precision; they may be taught to think with vigour and perspicuity; and to crown the whole, by a diligent attention to these books, all may advance in virtue.

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The works of Dr. Johnson have so long stood the test of public opinion, that an apology for offering a new edition is hardly necessary. While a part of his works are advantageously known to the general reader, there are many of them, from various causes, which have not been so extensively read. Among these causes, may be stated the fact that some of them have never been published in this country at all; while others have never been contained in any uniform edition of his works. It may also be added, that so far as the works of Dr. Johnson have been published, the price demanded for them has prevented their coming within the reach of the great mass of readers.

The present is the only complete edition of Dr. Johnson's works which has been published in this country. It will be found to contain much that is valuable in itself, beside many papers of much curiosity, including every variety of subject which a mind so comprehensive as his might naturally embrace. The American reader will also here find a surer test by which the intellectual powers of Dr. Johnson may be appreciated;—for although these have been acknowledged to be of the highest cast, yet it has been a general impression that they were more particularly confined to one species of literature—that of purifying and elevating the standard of the English language.

The Political tracts of Dr. Johnson are but little known to the great mass of readers in this country. The author, with his usual vigour, entered fully into the political feelings of the times in which he lived. The relations between this country and Great Britain at that period, are, as a matter of history, interesting to all Americans. Dr. Johnson defended with much tenacity the original rights of the Indians, and denounced the wrongs imposed upon them by the English and French. In allusion to the war between the French and English, about the year 1756, which began in this country, he says, "The American war between the French and us is therefore only a quarrel between two robbers for the spoils of a passenger." And yet when we had become colonies to Great Britain he equally defended the most odious features of government toward the colonies. A specimen of this may be found in a paper entitled "Taxation no tyranny—an answer to the resolutions and address of the American Congress 1775," (vol. ii. p. 425.) Could he have foreseen the progress and termination of the struggle which was then commencing, he might have uttered as a truth, what he then indited as a bitter sarcasm. "The heroes of Boston, if the Stamp Act had not been repealed, would have left their town, their port, and their trade, have resigned the splendour of opulence, and quitted the delight of neighbourhood, to disperse themselves over the country, where they would till the ground, and fish in the rivers. and range the mountains, and be free."

As an essayist, Dr. Johnson may be placed upon a par with the writers of the Spectator. Although, in this species of his writing, there may not be found that sprightliness and lively manner which at once wins the attention, yet there is solidity and beauty which will bear thorough and close examination, and stand the severest test of scrutiny and time.

Although not exactly within the compass of the present volumes, we may say a word in relation to the great Dictionary of Dr. Johnson. This is undoubtedly at the head of all similar works in the English language, and will stand as a monument of the author's genius, and unparalleled research and industry, so long as the language shall be spoken and read.

Previous to the completion of this work, no general standard for the English language was acknowledged. The intention of the author was to supply this deficiency —in his own words "the chief intent of it is to preserve the purity, and ascertain the meaning of our English idiom." In fulfilling this task, Dr. Johnson accomplished what falls to the lot of few men in any undertaking. He made that work which was the first standard of the English language so perfect, that not one of all who followed him, has been able to improve it. Some few indeed have enjoyed an ephemeral celebrity; but while they are gradually sinking into oblivion, the value and beauty of this great work is becoming more and more appreciated. We cannot but admire the determination of Dr. Johnson to undertake this work, which he knew would add little or nothing to his literary fame during his lifetime. "I knew," says he, "that the work in which I engaged is generally considered as a drudgery for the blind, as the proper toil for artless industry; a task that requires neither the light of learning, nor the activity of genius, but may be successfully performed without any higher quality than that of bearing burdens with dull patience, and beating the tract of the alphabet with sluggish resolution."

There is one consideration alone which should entitle the works of Dr. Johnson to an attentive, and often repeated perusal. It is the perfection of style and elegance of diction with which they are written. In this they may be set down as models.

New York, September 1832.

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HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

This work was written by Dr. Johnson for "The Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette," projected in the year 1751, by Mr. J. Newberry, Bookseller. The preface to the Ramblér contains an outline of the Life of the celebrated author of these papers; we shall therefore here only present our readers with a few observations on the style, &c. of Dr. Johnson, which he will not find so copiously described as we could wish in our preliminary observations on the Rambler.

The Doctor is said to have been allowed a share in the profits of this newspaper, for which he was to furnish a short essay on such subjects as might suit the taste of the times, and distinguish this publication from it contemporaries. The first Essay appeared on Saturday, April 15th, 1758, and continued to be published on the same day, weekly, until April 5th, 1760, when the Idler was concluded.

The Rambler may be considered as Johnson's great work. It was the basis of that high reputation which went on increasing to the end of his days. The circulation of those periodical essays was not, at first, equal to ther merit. They had not, like the Spectators, the art of charming by variety; and indeed how could it be expected? The wits of Queen Anne's reign sent their contributions to the Spectator; and Johnson stood alone. A stage-coach, says Sir Richard Steele, must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not. So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners are acute and instructive; and the papers, professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprung. Of this uniformity Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and, by consequence, more agreeable to the generality of readers.

It is remarkable, that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or at least would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known, that he praised in Cowley the ease and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and Sir William Temple, followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, "He is the Raphael of Essay Writers." How he differed so widely from such elegant models is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly Sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is, "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." But he forgot the observation of Dryden:—"If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them." There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had what Locke calls a roundabout view of his subject; and though he was never tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an Original Thinker. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, *quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret.* Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was born to write, converse, and live with ease; and he found an early patron in Lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his mind. His Latin poetry shows, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties of the Roman classics; and when he cultivated his native language, no wonder that he formed that graceful style, which has been so justly admired; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet never over-wrought; rich in allusion, yet pure and perspicuous; correct without labour, and, though sometimes deficient in strength, yet always musical. His essays in general, are on the surface of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of humour. Sir Roger de Coverly, and the Tory Fox-hunter, need not to be mentioned. Johnson had a fund of humour, but he did not know it, nor was he willing to descend to the familiar idiom and the variety of diction which that mode of composition required. The letter, in the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl that wants a place, will illustrate this observation. Addison possessed an uncloaded imagination, alive to the first objects of nature and of art. He reaches the sublime without any apparent effort. When he tells us, "If we consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; if we still discover new firmaments and new lights that are sunk further in those unfathomable depths of æther, we are lost in a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnifi-

cence and immensity of nature;" the ease, with which this passage rises to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm that captivates the reader. Johnson is always lofty; he seems, to use Dryden's phrase, to be o'er informed with meaning, and his words do not appear to himself adequate to his conception. He moves in state, and his periods are always harmonious. His Oriental Tales are in the true style of eastern magnificence, and yet none of them are so much admired as the Visions of Mirza. In matters of criticism, Johnson is never the echo of preceding writers. He thinks and decides for himself. If we except the Essays on the pleasures of imagination, Addison cannot be called a philosophical critic. His moral Essays are beautiful; but in that province nothing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson used to say, that the Essay on "The Burthens of Mankind" (in the Spectator, No. 558) was the most exquisite he had ever read. Talking of himself, Johnson said, "Topham Beauclark has wit, and every thing comes from him with ease; but when I say a good thing, I seem to labour." When we compare him with Addison, the contrast is still stronger. Addison lends grace and ornament to truth; Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty. Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty; Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splended robes, not labouring at the plough. Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus:

"Vultu, quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

Johnson is Jupiter Tonans; he darts his lightning, and rolls his thunder, in the cause or virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of his ideas; he pours along, familiarising the terms of philosophy, with bold inversions, and sonorous periods; but we may apply to him what Pope has said of Homer:—"It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it; like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense."

It is not the design of this comparison to decide between those two eminent writers. In matters of taste every reader will chose for himself. Johnson is always profound, and of course gives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms while he instructs; and writing, as he always does, a pure, an elegant, and idiomatic style, he may be pronounced the safest model for imitation.

The Essays written by Johnson in the Adventurer may be called a continuation of the Rambler. The Idler, in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and unlabourcd elegance. It is the Odyssey after the Iliad. Intense thinking would not become the Idler. The first number presents a well-drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertisement in the beginning of the first volume informs us, that twelve entire Essays were a contribution from different hands. One of these, No. 33, is the journal of a Senior fellow at Cambridge, but, as Johnson, being himself an original thinker, always revolted from servile imitation, he has printed the piece, with an apology, importing that the journal of a citizen in the Spectator almost precluded the attempt of any subsequent writer. This account of the Idler may be closed, after observing, that the author's mother being buried on the 23d of January 1759, there is an admirable paper, occasioned by that event, on Saturday the 27th of the same month, No. 41. The reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another fine paper in the Rambler, No. 54, on the conviction that rushes on the mind at the bed of a dying friend.

The Idlers, during the time of their publication, were frequently copied into contemporary works without any acknowledgment. The author, who was also a proprietor of the Universal Chronicle, in which they appeared, hurled his vengeance on the pirates in the following "Hue and Cry," which, as coming from Dr. Johnson's pen, may justly be deemed a literary curiosity.

"London, Jan. 5, 1759. Advertisement. The proprietors of the paper, entitled "The Idler," having found that those essays are inserted in the newspapers and magazines with so little regard to justice or decency, that the Universal Chronicle in which they first appear, is not always mentioned, think it necessary to declare to the publishers of those collections, that however patiently they have hitherto endured these injuries, made yet more injurious by contempt, they have now determined to endure them no longer. —They have already seen essays, for which a very large price is paid, transferred with the most shameless rapacity into the weekly or monthly compilations, and their right, at least for the present, alienated from them, before they could themselves be said to enjoy it. But they would not willingly be thought to want tenderness even for men by whom no tenderness hath been shown. The past is without remedy, and shall be without resentment. But those who have been thus busy with their sickles in the fields of their neighbours, are henceforward to take notice, that the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever shall, without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our papers, is to expect that we shall vindicate our due, by the means which justice prescribes, and which are warranted by the immemorial prescriptions of honourable trade. We shall lay hold, in our turn, on their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide margin and diffuse typography, contract them into a narrow space, and sell them at an humble price; yet not with a view of growing rich by confiscations, for we think not much better of money got by punishment than by crimes: we shall therefore, when our losses are repaid, give what profit shall remain to the Magdalens: for we know not who can be more properly taxed for the support of penitent prostitutes than prostitutes in whom there yet appears neither penitence nor shame."——

The effect of this singular manifesto is not now known; but if "essays for which a large price has been paid" be not words of course, they may prove that the author received an immediate remuneration for his labour, independent of his share in the general profits.

Nos. 33, 93, and 96, were written by Mr. Thomas Warton. Thomas Warton was the

younger brother of Dr. Joseph Warton, and was born at Basingstoke in 1728. He very early manifested a taste for verse; and there is extant a well-turned translation of an epigram of Martial composed by him in his ninth year. He was educated under his father, who kept a school at Basingstoke, till he was admitted in 1743 a commoner of Trinity College, Oxford. Here he exercised his poetical talent to so much advantage, that on the appearance of Mason's Elegy of "Isis," which severely reflected on the disloyalty of Oxford at that period, he was encouraged by Dr. Huddesford, president of his college, to vindicate the cause of the university. This task he performed with great applause, by writing, in his 21st year, "The Triumph of Isis;" a piece of much spirit and fancy, in which he retaliated upon the bard of Cam by satirising the courtly venality then supposed to distinguished the loyal university, and sung in no common strains the past and present glories of Oxford. This on his part was fair warfare, though as a peace-offering he afterwards excluded the poem from his volume of collected pieces. His "Progress of Discontent," published in 1750, in a miscellany entitled "The Student," exhibited to great advantage his power in the familiar style, and his talent for humour, with a knowledge of life extraordinary at his early age, especially if composed, as is said, for a college-exercise in 1746. In 1750 he took the degree of M. A., and in the following year became a Fellow of his college. He appears now to have unalterably devoted himself to the pursuit of poetry and elegant literature in a university-residence. His spirited satire, entitled "Newmarket," and pointed against the ruinous passion for the turf; his "Ode for Music;" and "Verses on the Death of the Prince of Wales;" were written about this time; and in 1753 he was the editor of a small collection of poems, which, under the title of "The Union," was printed at Edinburgh, and contained several of his own pieces. In 1754 he made himself known as a critic and a diligent student of poetical antiquities, by his observations on Spenser's Fairy Queen, in one volume, afterwards enlarged to two volumes; a work well received by the public, and which made a considerable addition to his literary reputation. These various proofs of his abilities caused him very properly to be elected in 1757 professor of poetry to the university, an office which he held for the usual period of ten years, and rendered respectable by the erudition and taste displayed in his lectures. Dr. Johnson was at this time publishing his "Idler," and Warton who had long been intimately acquainted with him, contributed the three papers we have mentioned to that work. He gave a specimen of his classical proficiency in 1758 by the publication "Inscriptionum Romanarum Metricarum Delectus," a collection of select Latin epigrams and inscriptions, to which were annexed a few modern ones, on the antique model, five of them by himself. He drew up in 1760, for the Biographica Britannica, the life of Sir Thomas Pope, which he published separately, much enlarged, in 1772 and 1780. Another contribution to literary biography was his "Life and Literary Remains of Dr. Bathurst," published in 1761. A piece of local humour, which was read at the time with great avidity, dropped from his pen in 1760 with the title, "A Companion to the Guide, and a Guide to the Companion; being a complete Supplement to all the Accounts of Oxford hitherto published." The lapse of time, and the new reign, had now entirely restored to Oxford its ancient virtue of loyalty; and Warton, who had lamented the death of George II. in a copy of verses addressed to Mr. Pitt, continued the courtly strain, though with due dignity, in lines on the marriage of George III. and on the birth of the Prince of Wales, printed in the university collection. Still ranking equally with the wits and with the poets of Isis, he edited in 1764 the "Oxford Sausage," of several pieces in which lively miscellany he was the writer. In 1766 he again appeared as a classical editor by superintending the Anthology of Cephalus, printed at the Clarendon-press, to which he prefixed a learned and ingenious preface. He took the degree of B. D. in 1761, and in 1771 was instituted to the small living of Kiddington in Oxfordshire, on the presentation of the Earl of Litchfield, then chancellor of the university. An edition of Theocritus in 2 vols. 4to. which was published in 1770, gave him celebrity not only at home, but among the scholars of the continent.

A History of English Poetry is said to have been meditated by Pope, who was but indifferently qualified by learning, whatever he might have been by taste, for such an undertaking. Gray, who possessed every requisite for the work, except industry, entertained a distant idea of engaging in it, with the assistance of Mason; but he shrunk from the magnitude of the task, and readily relinquished his project, when he heard that a similar design was adopted by Warton. At what period he first occupied himself in this extensive plan of writing and research, we are not informed; but in 1774 he had proceeded so far as to publish the first volume in quarto; and he pursued an object now apparently become the great mark of his studies, with so much assiduity, that he brought out a second volume in 1778, and a third in 1781. He now relaxed in his labours, and never executed more than a few sheets of a fourth volume. The work had grown upon his hands, and had greatly exceeded his first estimate; so that the completion of the design, which was to have terminated only with the commencement of the eighteenth century, was still very remote, supposing a due proportion to have been preserved throughout. Warton's "History of English Poetry" is regarded as his *opus magnum;* and is indeed an ample monument of his reading, as well as of his taste and critical judgment. The majority of its readers, however, will probably be of opinion that he has dwelt too minutely upon those early periods in which poetry can scarcely be said to have existed in this country, and has been too profuse of transcripts from pieces destitute of all merit but their age. Considered, however, as literary antiquarianism, the work is very interesting; and though inaccuracies have been detected, it cannot be denied to abound with curious information. His brother gave some expectation of carrying on the history to the completion of the fourth volume, but seems to have done little or nothing towards fulfilling it. As a proof that Warton began to be weary of his task, it appears that about 1781 he had turned his thoughts to another laborious undertaking, which was a county-history of Ox

fordshire; and in 1782 he published as a specimen a topographical account of his parish of Kiddington. In the same year he entered into the celebrated Chattertonian controversy, and published An Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems ascribed to Rowley, which he decidedly pronounced to be the fabrication of their pretended editor. His income was augmented in this year by presentation to a donative in Somersetshire; and as he was free both from ambition and avarice, he seems to have looked no farther for ecclesiastical promotion. In 1785 the place of Camden-professor of history at Oxford, vacant by the resignation of the present Sir W. Scott, was conferred upon him. He attended to his duties so far as to deliver a learned and ingenious inaugural lecture, but that was the limit of his professional exertions. Another office at this time demanded new efforts. At his Majesty's express desire the post of Poet-laureat, vacated by the death of Whitehead, was offered to him; and, in accepting it, he laudably resolved to use his best endeavours for rendering it respectable. He varied the monotony of anniversary court compliment by retrospective views of the splendid period of English history and the glories of chivalry, and by other topics adapted to poetical description, though little connected with the proper theme of the day; and though his lyric strains underwent some ridicule on that account, they in general enhanced the literary valuation of laureat odes. His concluding publication was an edition of the juvenile poems of Milton, in which it was his purpose to explain his allusions, point out his imitations, illustrate his beauties, and elucidate his obsolete diction and peculiar phraseology. This was a task of no great effort to one qualified like Warton; and engaging in it, rather than in the completion of his elaborate plans, seems to prove that the indolence of advancing years and a collegiate life was gaining upon him. Of this work the first edition appeared in 1785, and the second in 1791, a short time before his death. He had intended to include in his plan a similar edition of the Paradise Regained, and the Samson Agonistes, of the great author, of whom, notwithstanding religious and political differences, he was a warm admirer; and he left notes on both these pieces. But his constitution now began to give way, though the period of old age was yet distant. In his 62d year an attack of the gout shattered his frame, and was succeeded, in May 1790, by a paralytic seizure, which carried him off at his lodgings in Oxford. His remains were interred, with every academical honour, in the chapel of Trinity College.

The character of Thomas Warton was marked by some of those peculiarities which commonly fix upon a man the appellation of an humorist; and a variety of stories current among the collegians show that he was more intent upon gratifying his own habitual tastes, than regardful of the usual modes and decorums of society. But he was substantially good-humoured, friendly, and placid; and if his dislike of form and restraint sometimes made him prefer the company of inferiors to that of equals, the choice was probably in some measure connected with that love of nature, and spirit of independence, which may be discerned in his writings. That he employed a large portion of his time in the cultivation of his mind by curious and elegant literature, his various productions abundantly testify; yet he appears to have wanted the resolution and steady industry necessary for the completion of a great design; and some remarkable instances of inaccuracy or forgetfulness prove that his exertions were rather desultory than regular. This disposition was less injurious to him in his poetical capacity than in any other, whence he will probably live longest in fame as a poet. Scarcely any one of that tribe has noted with finer observation the minute circumstances in rural nature that afford pleasure in description, or has derived from the regions of fiction more animated and picturesque scenery. His pieces are very various in subject, and none of them long. He can only rank among the minor poets; but perhaps few volumes in that class will more frequently be taken up for real amusement. Several editions of his poems were called for in his life-time, and since his death an edition of his works has been given by Mr. Mant, in 2 vols. octavo, 1802, with a biographical account of the author prefixed.

When Mr. Warton wrote his three papers in the Idler, he lived in habits of intimacy and correspondence with Dr. Johnson; he was likewise a member of the Literary Club, and made occasional journeys to London, to attend that, and to enjoy the pleasures of Sir Joshua Reynolds' company, of whom some notice is now to be taken as writer of the Essays Nos. 76, 79, and 82, in this work.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was the son of a clergyman at Plympton, in Devonshire, and born there in 1723. Being intended for the church, he received a suitable education under his father, and then removed to Oxford, where he took his degrees in arts; but having a great taste for drawing, he resolved to make painting his profession, and accordingly was placed under Hudson the portrait painter. About 1749 he went to Italy, in company with the honourable Mr. Keppel, his early friend and patron. After studying the works of the most illustrious masters two years, Mr. Reynolds returned to London, where he found no encouragement given to any other branch of the art than to portrait painting. He was of course under the necessity of complying with the prevailing taste, and in that walk soon became unrivalled. The first picture by which he distinguished himself, after his return, was the portrait of Mr. Keppel. He did not, however, confine himself to portraits, but painted several historical pictures of high and acknowledged merit. When the royal academy was instituted he was appointed president, which station he held with honour to himself and advantage to the arts till 1791, and then resigned it. He was also appointed principal painter to the king, and knighted. His literary merits, and other accomplishments, procured him the friendship of the most distinguished men of genius in his time, particularly Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Garrick: and Sir Joshua had the honour of instituting the literary club, of which they were members. He was likewise a member of the royal society, and of that of antiquaries; and was created doctor of laws by the universities of Oxford and Dublin. Sir Joshua's academical discourses display the soundest judgment, the most refined taste, and a perfect acquaintance with the works of different masters; and are written in a

clear and elegant style. He died in 1792, and lies buried in St. Paul's cathedral. Having no children, he bequeathed the principal part of his property to his niece, since married to the Earl of Inchiquin, now Marquis of Thomond.

We shall conclude our sketch of the life of this illustrious artist, by quoting his opinion of Dr. Johnson, which is equally honourable to himself and his friend. Speaking of his own discourses, our great artist says, "Whatever merit they have must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. Johnson. I do not mean to say, though it certainly would be to the credit of these discourses if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them; but he qualified my mind to think justly. No man had, like him, the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking. Perhaps other men might have equal knowledge, but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to enlist in the train of his auditors; and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and over-bearing. The desire of shining in conversation was in him indeed a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on poetry, on life, and on every thing about us, I applied to our art, with what success others must judge."

No. 67 was written by another intimate and affectionate friend of Dr. Johnson's, Bennet Langton, Esq. of Langton in Lincolnshire. His acquaintance with Dr. Johnson commenced soon after the conclusion of the Rambler, which Mr. Langton, then a youth, had read with so much admiration that Mr. Boswell says he came to London chiefly with a view of being introduced to its author. Mr. Langton died December the 18th, 1801.

HISTORICAL PREFACE TO THE RAMBLER.

The long space which intervened between the Guardian and the Rambler, from 1713 to 1750, was filled up by many attempts of the periodical kind, but scarcely any of these had a reformation of manners and morals for their object. A few valuable papers on general and useful topics appeared, but so incumbered with angry political contests, as to be soon forgotten. Dr. Johnson was the first to restore the periodical essay to its original purpose, and it will appear soon that there is none of his works on which he set a higher value than on his Rambler. He seems to have thought, that it would constitute his principal fame, and the learned world appear to have been of the same opinion.

Its commencement was a matter of great importance with him; and he was so desirous to benefit the age by this production, that he began to write with the solemnity of preparatory prayer. In the volume of his Devotions, published soon after his death, we find the following, entitled "Prayer on the Rambler."

"Almighty God, the giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly; grant, I beseech thee, that in this my undertaking, thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the salvation both of myself and others: grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Amen."

The first paper was published on Tuesday, March 20, 1750, and the work continued without the least interruption, every Tuesday and Saturday, until Saturday, March 14, 1752, on which day it closed.

The sale was very inconsiderable, and seldom exceeded five hundred copies: and it is very remarkable that the only paper which had a prosperous sale (No. 97) was one of the very few which Dr. Johnson did not write. It was written by Richardson, author of Clarissa, Pamela, and Sir Charles Grandison. Modern taste will not allow it a very high place, but its style was at that time better adapted to the readers of the Rambler than that of Dr. Johnson.—It may here be noticed, that the assistance our author received from correspondents amounted to a very small proportion. The four billets in No. 10, were written by Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone; No. 30, was written by Miss Talbot, and Nos. 44, and 100, by the learned and celebrated Mrs. Carter.

Of the characters described in the Rambler, some were not altogether fictitious, yet they were not exact portraits. The author employed some adventitious circumstances to produce effect. *Prospero*, in No. 200, was intended for the celebrated actor Garrick. By *Gelidus* in No. 24, the author is said to have meant Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. The man "immortalized for purring like a cat," was one Busby, a proctor in the Commons. He who barked so ingeniously, and then called the drawer to drive away the dog, was father to Dr. Saltar of the Charterhouse. He who sung a song, and by correspondent motions

of his arm chalked out a giant on the wall, was one Richardson, an attorney. *Polyphilus*, in No. 19, is said to have been drawn from the various studies of Floyer Sydenhem, but no produce of his studies is known except his translations.

It has been remarked by the editor of the "British Essayists" that the RAMBLER made its way very slowly into the world. This may be true, if spoken of its appearance in numbers. The style was new; it appeared harsh, involved, and perplexed; it required more than a transitory inspection to be understood; but this repulsive appearance was soon overcome: and few works have been more successful, when reprinted in volumes. It was admired by scholars, and recommended by the friends of religion and literature, as a book by which a man might be taught to think: and the author lived to see ten large editions printed in England, besides those which were clandestinely printed in other parts of Great Britain, in Ireland, and in America. For some years past the demand for it has been greater than for any of the "British Essayists;" its influence on the literature of the age has been great. Dr. Johnson is certainly not to be imitated with perfect success, yet the attempt to imitate him, where it has neither been servile or artificial, has elevated the style of every species of literary composition. "In every thing we perceive more vigour, more spirit, more elegance. He not only began a revolution in our language, but lived till it was almost completed."

It has already been said that Dr. Johnson set a high value on the RAMBLER, and it may now be added that he bestowed a labour upon it, with which he never favoured any other of his works. This circumstance, which escaped the researches of all his biographers, was lately discovered by the editor of the "British Essayists," whose words we shall borrow on the present occasion.

After noticing the mistakes Mr. Boswell had fallen into, on the subject of the *perfection* of the RAMBLERS at their first appearance, the editor of the "Essayists" says, "Is it not surprising that this friend and companion of our illustrious author, who has obliged the public with the most perfect delineation ever exhibited of any human being, and who declared so often that he was determined

'To lose no drop of that immortal man'.—

that one so inquisitive after the most trifling circumstance connected with Dr. Johnson's character or history, should have never heard or discovered that Dr. Johnson almost *re-wrote* the RAMBLER after the first folio edition. Yet the alterations made by him in the second and third editions of the RAMBLER far exceed *six thousand;* a number which may justify the use of the word *re-wrote*, although it must not be taken in its literal acceptation. A comparison of the first edition with the fourth or any subsequent edition will show the curious examiner in what these alterations consist. In the mean time we may apply to the author what he says of Pope—'He laboured his works, first to gain reputation, and afterwards to keep it.' He was not content to satisfy; he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his best: he did not court the candour, but dared the judgment of his readers; and expecting no indulgence from others, he showed none himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence till he had left nothing to be forgiven."

THE RAMBLER.

No. 1.] TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 1749-50.

Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo,
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.

JUV.

Why to expatiate in this beaten field,
Why arms, oft used in vain, I mean to wield;
If time permit, and candour will attend,
Some satisfaction this essay may lend.

ELPHINSTON.

THE difficulty of the first address on any new occasion, is felt by every man in his transactions with the world, and confessed by the settled and regular forms of salutation which necessity has introduced into all languages. Judgment was wearied with the perplexity of being forced upon choice, where there was no motive to preference; and it was found convenient that some easy method of introduction should be established, which, if it wanted the allurement of novelty, might enjoy the security of prescription.

Perhaps few authors have presented themselves before the public, without wishing that such ceremonial modes of entrance had been anciently established as might have freed them from those dangers which the desire of pleasing is certain to produce, and precluded the vain expedients of softening censure by apologies, or rousing attention by abruptness.

The epic writers have found the proemial part of the poem such an addition to their undertaking, that they have almost unanimously adopted the first lines of Homer, and the reader needs only be informed of the subject, to know in what manner the poem will begin.

But this solemn repetition is hitherto the peculiar distinction of heroic poetry; it has never been legally extended to the lower orders of literature, but seems to be considered as an hereditary privilege, to be enjoyed only by those who claim it from their alliance to the genius of Homer.

The rules which the injudicious use of this prerogative suggested to Horace, may indeed be applied to the direction of candidates for inferior fame; it may be proper for all to remember, that they ought not to raise expectation which it is not in their power to satisfy, and that it is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke.

This precept has been long received, both from regard to the authority of Horace, and its conformity to the general opinion of the world; yet there have been always some, that thought it no deviation from modesty to recommend their own labours, and imagined themselves entitled by indisputable merit to an exemption from general restraints, and to elevations not allowed in common life. They, perhaps, believed, that when, like Thucydides, they bequeathed to mankind κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ *an estate for ever*, it was an additional favour to inform them of its value.

It may, indeed, be no less dangerous to claim on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and intrepidity, to which we often yield, as to a resistless power; nor can he reasonably expect the confidence of others, who too apparently distrusts himself.

Plutarch, in his enumeration of the various occasions on which a man may without just offence proclaim his own excellencies, has omitted the case of an author entering the world; unless it may be comprehended under his general position, that a man may lawfully praise himself for those qualities which cannot be known but from his own mouth; as when he is among strangers, and can have no opportunity of an actual exertion of his powers. That the case of an author is parallel, will scarcely be granted, because he necessarily discovers the degree of his merit to his judges, when he appears at his trial. But it should be remembered, that unless his judges are inclined to favour him, they will hardly be persuaded to hear the cause.

In love, the state which fills the heart with a degree of solicitude next that of an author, it has been held a maxim, that success is most easily obtained by indirect and unperceived approaches, he who too soon professes himself a lover, raises obstacles to his own wishes, and those whom disappointments have taught experience, endeavour to conceal their passion till they believe their mistress wishes for the discovery. The same method, if it were practicable to writers, would save many complaints of the severity of the age, and the caprices of criticism. If a man could glide imperceptibly into the favour of the public, and only proclaim his pretensions to literary honours when he is sure of not being rejected, he might commence author with better hopes, as his failings might escape contempt, though he shall never attain much regard.

But since the world supposes every man that writes, ambitious of applause, as some ladies have taught themselves to believe that every man intends love, who expresses civility, the miscarriage of any endeavour in learning raises an unbounded contempt, indulged by most minds with-

out scruple, as an honest triumph over unjust claims, and exhorbitant expectations. The artifices of those who put themselves in this hazardous state, have therefore been multiplied in proportion to their fear as well as their ambition; and are to be looked upon with more indulgence, as they are incited at once by the two great movers of the human mind, the desire of good and the fear of evil. For who can wonder that, allured on one side, and frightened on the other, some should endeavour to gain favour by bribing the judge with an appearance of respect which they do not feel, to excite compassion by confessing weakness of which they are not convinced; and others to attract regard by a show of openness and magnanimity, by a daring profession of their own deserts, and a public challenge of honours and rewards?

The ostentatious and haughty display of themselves has been the usual refuge of diurnal writers; in vindication of whose practice it may be said, that what it wants in prudence is supplied by sincerity, and who at least may plead, that if their boasts deceive any into the perusal of their performances, they defraud them of but little time.

———*Quid enim? Concurritur—horæ*
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

The battle join, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight.
FRANCIS.

The question concerning the merit of the day is soon decided, and we are not condemned to toil through half a folio, to be convinced that the writer has broke his promise.

It is one among many reasons for which I purpose to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay on Tuesday and Saturday, that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not happen to please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.

There are, indeed, many conveniences almost peculiar to this method of publication, which may naturally flatter the author, whether he be confident or timorous. The man to whom the extent of his knowledge, or the sprightliness of his imagination, has, in his own opinion, already secured the praises of the world, willingly takes that way of displaying his abilities which will soonest give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of fame; it heightens his alacrity to think in how many places he shall hear what he is now writing, read with ecstacies to-morrow. He will often please himself with reflecting, that the author of a large treatise must proceed with anxiety, lest, before the completion of his work, the attention of the public may have changed its object; but that he who is confined to no single topic, may follow the national taste through all its variations, and catch the *aura popularis*, the gale of favour, from what point soever it shall blow.

Nor is the prospect less likely to ease the doubts of the cautious, and the terrors of the fearful, for to such the shortness of every single paper is a powerful encouragement. He that questions his abilities to arrange the dissimilar parts of an extensive plan, or fears to be lost in a complicated system, may yet hope to adjust a few pages without perplexity; and if, when he turns over the repositories of his memory, he finds his collection too small for a volume, he may yet have enough to furnish out an essay. He that would fear to lay out too much time upon an experiment of which he knows not the event, persuades himself that a few days will show him what he is to expect from his learning and his genius. If he thinks his own judgment not sufficiently enlightened, he may, by attending to the remarks which every paper will produce, rectify his opinions. If he should with too little premeditation encounter himself by an unwieldy subject, he can quit it without confessing his ignorance, and pass to other topics less dangerous, or more tractable. And if he finds, with all his industry, and all his artifices, that he cannot deserve regard, or cannot attain it, he may let the design fall at once, and, without injury to others or himself, retire to amusements of greater pleasure, or to studies of better prospect.

No. 2.] SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1749-50.

Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.
STATIUS

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain,
Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
And ere he starts a thousand steps are lost.
POPE

THAT the mind of man is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in schemes of future felicity; and that we forget the proper use of the time now in our power to provide for the enjoyment of that which, perhaps, may never be granted us, has been frequently remarked; and as this practice is a commodious subject of raillery to the gay, and of declamation to the serious, it has been ridiculed with all the pleasantry of wit, and exaggerated with all the amplifications of rhetoric. Every instance, by which its absurdity might appear most flagrant, has been studiously collected; it has been marked with every epithet of contempt, and all the tropes and figures have been called forth against it.

Censure is willingly indulged, because it always implies some superiority; men please themselves with imagining that they have made a deeper search, or wider survey than others, and detected faults and follies, which escape vulgar observation. And the pleasure of wantoning in common topics is so tempting to a writer, that he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiments generally received enables him to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is so easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives only in idea, refuses immediate case for distant pleasures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings of life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjoy them; it affords such opportunities of triumphant exultation, to exem-

plify the uncertainty of the human state, to rouse mortals from their dream, and inform them of the silent celerity of time, that we may believe authors willing rather to transmit than examine so advantageous a principle, and more inclined o pursue a track so smooth and so flowery, than attentively to consider whether it leads to truth.

This quality of looking forward into futurity, seems the unavoidable condition of a being, whose motions are gradual, and whose life is progressive: as his powers are limited, he must use means for the attainment of his ends, and intend first what he performs last; as by continual advances from his first stage of existence, he is perpetually varying the horizon of his prospects, he must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire.

The end therefore which at present calls forth our efforts, will be found, when it is once gained, to be only one of the means to some remoter end. The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour, must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or enforced with too little distinction; for, not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of Heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens that by indulging early the raptures of success, we forget the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer the imagination to riot in the fruition of some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would, however, be few enterprises of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself in such a manner, that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicited to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may, indeed, be easily vitiated by the luxurious indulgence of hope, however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requires more to be cautioned against this anticipation of happiness, than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world, and, with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten, and those, whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of their infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physic of the mind, her cathartics of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the symptoms of the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection, not without some weak hope that my preservatives may extend their virtue to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm.
FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect; compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness; yet this worst, this meanest fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

Go now, and meditate thy tuneful lays.
ELPHINSTON

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect; that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth entitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind; that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprising or confident than himself, equally pleased

with their own productions, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by their friends.

But, though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures, or immersed in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges, prepossessed by passions, or corrupted by prejudices, which preclude their approbation of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is rejected, because it is not sufficiently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased: and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

No. 3.] TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 1750.

Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ. HOR.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours virtue shines;
Nor takes up power, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown.
ELPHINSTON.

THE task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new light in upon the mind, and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over, or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errors, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing, must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

It might be imagined that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous; that none would be found so malevolent as wantonly to add weight to the stone of Sisyphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expense of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning, or genius, who stand as sentinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving Ignorance and Envy the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of Critics, it is necessary for a new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the records of ancient times, that Argus was lulled by music, and Cerberus quieted with a sop; and am therefore inclined to believe that modern critics, who, if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of Argus, and can bark as loud as Cerberus, though, perhaps, they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, styled themselves the ministers of Criticism, without any authentic evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

Criticism, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of Labour and of Truth: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of Justice, and brought up by her in the palace of Wisdom. Being soon distinguished by the celestials, for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess of Fancy, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the Muses, when they sung before the throne of Jupiter.

When the Muses condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by Criticism, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, Justice gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tinctured with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden foliage of amaranths and bays; the other end was encircled with cypress and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by Labour, and lighted by Truth, of which it was the particular quality immediately to show every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common eyes. Whatever Art could complicate, or Folly could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the torch of Truth, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and showed at once all the absurdities to which they served for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetoric often sold to falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, Criticism came down to survey the performances of those who professed themselves the votaries of the Muses. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the

torch of Truth, and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine end of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the works which required her inspection, there was some imposture attempted; that false colours were laboriously laid; that some secret inequality was found between the words and sentiments, or some dissimilitude of the ideas and the original objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to enlarge the appearance of the whole, without contributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and they were made whenever these faults were committed, Criticism refused the touch which conferred the sanction of immortality, and, when the errors were frequent and gross, reversed the sceptre, and let drops of Lethe distil from the poppies and cypress, a fatal mildew, which immediately began to waste the work away, till it was at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the test, in which, when the strongest light was thrown upon them, their beauties and faults appeared so equally mingled, that Criticism stood with her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt whether to shed Lethe, or ambrosia, upon them. These at last increased to so great a number, that she was weary of attending such doubtful claims, and for fear of using improperly the sceptre of Justice, referred the cause to be considered by Time.

The proceedings of Time, though very dilatory, were, some few caprices excepted, conformable to justice; and many who thought themselves secure by a short forbearance, have sunk under his sithe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

Criticism having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon Time, was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness Astrea, and left Prejudice and False Taste to ravage at large as the associates of Fraud and Mischief; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select minds, fitted for its reception by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of which the shivers, that formed the ambrosial end, were caught up by Flattery, and those that had been infected with the waters of Lethe were, with equal haste, seized by Malevolence. The followers of Flattery, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light, but touched indiscriminately whatever Power or Interest happened to exhibit. The companions of Malevolence were supplied by the Furies with a torch, which had this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

> No light, but rather darkness visible,
> Served only to discover sights of wo.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of Flattery and Malevolence marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality, or condemn to oblivion. But this sceptre had now lost its power; and Time passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

No. 4.] SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1750.

> *Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.* HOR.
>
> And join both profit and delight in one. CREECH.

THE works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comic poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroic romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner almost all the fictions of the last age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a ship wreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum veniæ minus*, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader: as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just co-

piers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears, are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellences in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason, these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed: as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation; greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind as upon a mirror which shows all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of character, that it is drawn as it appears; so many characters ought never to be drawn; nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by Treachery for Innocence, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellences; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others, at least of themselves,

will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute, who confound the colours of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover, why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gayety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of Romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.*

No. 5.] TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 1750.

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.
VIRG.

Now every field, now every tree is green;
Now genial Nature's fairest face is seen.
ELPHINSTON.

Every man is sufficiently discontented with some circumstances of his present state, to suffer his imagination to range more or less in quest of future happiness, and to fix upon some point of time, in which, by the removal of the inconvenience which now perplexes him, or acquisition of the advantage which he at present wants, he shall find the condition of his life very much improved.

When this time, which is too often expected with great impatience, at last arrives, it generally comes without the blessing for which it was desired; but we solace ourselves with some new prospect, and press forward again with equal eagerness.

It is lucky for a man, in whom this temper prevails, when he turns his hopes upon things wholly out of his own power; since he forbears then to precipitate his affairs, for the sake of the great event that is to complete his felicity, and waits for the blissful hour with less neglect of the measures necessary to be taken in the mean time.

I have long known a person of this temper, who indulged his dream of happiness with less hurt to himself than such chimerical wishes commonly produce, and adjusted his scheme with such address, that his hopes were in full bloom three parts of the year, and in the other part never wholly blasted. Many, perhaps, would be desirous of learning by what means he procured to himself such a cheap and lasting satisfaction. It was gained by a constant practice of referring the removal of all his uneasiness to the coming of the next spring; if his health was impaired, the spring would restore it; if what he wanted was at a high price, it would fall its value in the spring.

The spring indeed did often come without any of these effects, but he was always certain that the next would be more propitious; nor was ever convinced, that the present spring would fail him before the middle of summer; for he always talked of the spring as coming till it was past, and when it was once past, every one agreed with him that it was coming.

By long converse with this man, I am, perhaps, brought to feel immodcrate pleasure in the contemplation of this delightful season; but I have the satisfaction of finding many, whom it can be no shame to resemble, infected with the same enthusiasm; for there is, I believe, scarce any poet of eminence, who has not left some testimony of his fondness for the flowers, the zephyrs, and the warblers of the spring. Nor has the most luxuriant imagination been able to describe the serenity and happiness of the golden age, otherwise than by giving a perpetual spring, as the highest reward of uncorrupted innocence.

There is, indeed, something inexpressibly pleasing in the annual renovation of the world, and the new display of the treasures of nature. The cold and darkness of winter, with the naked deformity of every object on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped, as for what we may enjoy; and every budding flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us as a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The Spring affords to a mind, so free from the disturbance of cares or passions as to be vacant to calm amusements, almost every thing that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odours, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal, from the growth of his food, and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gayety, significantly expressed by the smile of nature.

Yet there are men to whom these scenes are able to give no delight, and who hurry away from all the varieties of rural beauty, to lose their hours and divert their thoughts by cards or assemblies, a tavern dinner, or the prattle of the day.

It may be laid down as a position which will seldom deceive, that when a man cannot bear his own company, there is something wrong. He must fly from himself either because he feels a tediousness in life from the equipoise of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one motion more than another, but as it is impelled

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* This excellent paper was occasioned by the popularity of "Roderick Random," and "Tom Jones," which appeared about this time, and have been the models of that species of romance, now known by the more common name of *Novel*.—C.

by some external power, must always have recourse to foreign objects; or he must be afraid of the intrusion of some unpleasing ideas, and perhaps is struggling to escape from the remembrance of a loss, the fear of a calamity, or some other thought of greater horror.

Those whom sorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleasures of contemplation, may properly apply to such diversions, provided they are innocent, as lay strong hold on the attention; and those, whom fear of any future affliction chains down to misery, must endeavour to obviate the danger.

My considerations shall, on this occasion, be turned on such as are burdensome to themselves merely because they want subjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open without affording them pleasure or instruction, because they never learned to read the characters.

A French author has advanced this seeming paradox, that *very few men know how to take a walk;* and, indeed, it is true, that few know how to take a walk with a prospect of any other pleasure, than the same company would have afforded them at home.

There are animals that borrow their colour from the neighbouring body, and consequently vary their hue as they happen to change their place. In like manner, it ought to be the endeavour of every man to derive his reflections from the objects about him; for it is to no purpose that he alters his position, if his attention continues fixed to the same point. The mind should be kept open to the access of every new idea, and so far disengaged from the predominance of particular thoughts, as easily to accommodate itself to occasional entertainment.

A man that has formed this habit of turning every new object to his entertainment, finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself without any temptations to envy or malevolence; faults, perhaps, seldom totally avoided by those, whose judgment is much exercised upon the works of art. He has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the sovereign Author of the universe, and probable hopes of making some discovery of benefit to others, or of profit to himself. There is no doubt but many vegetables and animals have qualities that might be of great use, to the knowledge of which there is not required much force of penetration, or fatigue of study, but only frequent experiments, and close attention. What is said by the chymists of their darling mercury, is, perhaps, true of every body through the whole creation, that if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.

Mankind must necessarily be diversified by various tastes, since life affords and requires such multiplicity of employments, and a nation of naturalists is neither to be hoped or desired; but it is surely not improper to point out a fresh amusement to those who languish in health, and repine in plenty, for want of some source of diversion that may be less easily exhausted, and to inform the multitudes of both sexes, who are burdened with every new day, that there are many shows which they have not seen.

He that enlarges his curiosity after the works of nature, demonstrably multiplies the inlets to happiness; and, therefore, the younger part of my readers, to whom I dedicate this vernal speculation, must excuse me for calling upon them, to make use at once of the spring of the year, and the spring of life; to acquire, while their minds may be yet impressed with new images, a love of innocent pleasures, and an ardour for useful knowledge; and to remember, that a blighted spring makes a barren year, and that the vernal flowers, however beautiful and gay, are only intended by nature as preparatives to autumnal fruits.

No. 6.] SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1750.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere: quod petis, hic est
Est Ulubris, animus si te non deficit æquus. HOR

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness which dwells at home.
With vain pursuits fatigued, at length you'll find,
No place excludes it from an equal mind.
ELPHINSTON

THAT man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised an utter exclusion of all corporeal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation: it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very properly inquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach? how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity? for though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission to the tyranny of casual troubles, is below the dignity of that mind, which however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for a union with infinite goodness, and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitiis pejora fovens
Proprium deserat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original.

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of perceiving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who, not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion and having nothing within that can entertain or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burden of life

are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of a bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the despatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one evening in conversation with each other; on a sudden, such are the revolutions of the world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptoms of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water?* These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thirst, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the variety of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and, indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errors, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness to which the imagination of a girl, upon the loss of her first lover, could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

"My desire," says he, "has been for some years past, though the execution has been accidentally diverted, and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts, which is the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to *bury himself in some obscure retreat*, he might have found, in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into public life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement needs not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence, when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannising over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retirement or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowley had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore, of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the *vanities* and *vexations* of the world, not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of America could afford him: but having once his mind embittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedition of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels.

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfaction. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries which he was so studious to obviate: for such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated: we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted, whether his distance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man, who feels pain, to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley having

known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement: he never suspected that the cause of his unhappiness was within, that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.*

No. 7.] TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1750.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——
Disjice terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere, finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.
BOETHIUS.

O thou whose power o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest:
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

THE love of retirement has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition, nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue, or science, the man whose faculties enable him to make ready comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

Nor will greatness, or abundance, exempt him from the importunities of this desire, since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand inquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder: for those who are most exalted above dependence or control, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, That there was no royal way to geometry. Other things may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or inspirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is a universal reason for some stated intervals of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me now especially to mention; a reason which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of Divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastic security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the Divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrors of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle represents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides, in most things that relate solely to this life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

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*See Dr. Johnson's Life of Cowley, vol. ix. p. 10—16

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure, before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered that almost every man has, in some part of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them, by an unresisting neutrality, to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of the influence which they must naturally gain by this pre-occupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires in the first endeavours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accustomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate, that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life, and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have power to transfer the weight to either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than the eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world, by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure, inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority, even without those irradiations from above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

No. 8.] SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1750.

—— Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam sceleris intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.

JUV

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault.

CREECH.

If the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account according to the manner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects, how small a proportion his real action would bear to his seeming possibilities of action, how many chasms he would find of wide and continued vacuity, and how many interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business, and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered through the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that, if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time which it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intellectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labour of the hands, and expedition of the feet.

For this reason the ancient generals often found themselves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle.

—— Media inter prælia semper
Sideribus cælique plagis, superisque vacavi.

Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes
I trace the planets, and survey the skies.

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present con-

dition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation; and by the natural frame of our bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pursuit, how it is to be cured of its defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure: my purpose being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering, that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality; irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what is a crime to do, it is a crime to think.* Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked deed, a man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude, but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning; and therefore I shall endeavour to show what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they regard the past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vigilance, who, perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of provision for the future; and, therefore, in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come: for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct, is indisputably necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience, we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those sentiments, which the great Author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good or bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι,
Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν,
Πῆ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι ἔδεον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρώτου ἐπέξιθι· καὶ μετέπειτα,
Εἰλὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιπλήσσεο, χρηστὰ δὲ, τέρπου.

Let not sleep (says Pythagoras) *fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. Where have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone, which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good.*

Our thoughts on present things being determined by the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions, which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection, and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

> Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
> No spot or stain behind. MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is entangled. Futurity is the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their

* This was determined before their time. See Matt. 28 C.

train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connexion with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular conditions, till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's power for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession, for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfal covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the public more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good, to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

No. 9.] TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1750.

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis. MART.

Choose what you are; no other state prefer.
ELPHINSTON.

IT is justly remarked by Horace, that howsoever every man may complain occasionally of the hardships of his condition, he is seldom willing to change it for any other on the same level; for whether it be that he, who follows an employment, made choice of it at first on account of its suitableness to his inclination; or that when accident, or the determination of others, have placed him in a particular station, he, by endeavouring to reconcile himself to it, gets the custom of viewing it only on the fairest side; or whether every man thinks that class to which he belongs the most illustrious, merely because he has honoured it with his name; it is certain that, whatever be the reason, most men have a very strong and active prejudice in favour of their own vocation, always working upon their minds, and influencing their behaviour.

This partiality is sufficiently visible in every rank of the human species: but it exerts itself more frequently and with greater force among those who have never learned to conceal their sentiments for reasons of policy, or to model their expressions by the laws of politeness; and therefore the chief contests of wit among artificers and handicraftsmen arise from a mutual endeavour to exalt one trade by depreciating another.

From the same principle are derived many consolations to alleviate the inconveniences to which every calling is peculiarly exposed. A blacksmith was lately pleasing himself at his anvil, with observing that though his trade was hot and sooty, laborious and unhealthy, yet he had the honour of living by his hammer, he got his bread like a man, and if his son should rise in the world, and keep his coach, nobody could reproach him that his father was a tailor.

A man, truly zealous for his fraternity is never so irresistibly flattered, as when some rival calling is mentioned with contempt. Upon this principle a linen-draper boasted that he had got a new customer, whom he could safely trust, for he could have no doubt of his honesty, since it was known, from unquestionable authority, that he was now filing a bill in chancery to delay payment for the clothes which he had worn the last seven years; and he himself had heard him declare, in a public coffee-house, that he looked upon the whole generation of woollen-drapers to be such despicable wretches, that no gentleman ought to pay them.

It has been observed that physicians and lawyers are no friends to religion; and many conjectures have been formed to discover the reason of such a combination between men who agree in nothing else, and who seem less to be affected, in their own provinces, by religious opinions, than any other part of the community. The truth is, very few of them have thought about religion; but they have all seen a parson: seen him in a habit different from their own, and therefore declared war against him. A young student from the inns of court, who has often attacked the curate of his father's parish with such arguments as his acquaintances could furnish, and returned to town without success, is now gone down with a resolution to destroy him; for he has learned at last how to manage a prig, and if he pretends to hold him again to syllogism, he has a catch in reserve, which neither logic nor metaphysics can resist.

> I laugh to think how your unshaken *Cato*
> Will look aghast, when unforeseen destruction
> Pours in upon him thus.

The malignity of soldiers and sailors against each other has been often experienced at the cost of their country; and, perhaps, no orders of men have an enmity of more acrimony, or longer continuance. When, upon our late successes at sea, some new regulations were concerted for establishing the rank of the naval commanders, a captain of foot very acutely remarked, that nothing was more absurd than to give any honorary rewards to seamen; "for honour," says he "ought only to be won by bravery, and all the world knows that in a sea-fight there is no danger, and therefore no evidence of courage."

But although this general desire of aggrandizing themselves, by raising their profession, betrays men to a thousand ridiculous and mischievous acts of supplantation and detraction, yet as almost all passions have their good as well as bad effects, it likewise excites ingenuity, and sometimes raises an honest and useful emulation of diligence. It may be observed in general, that

no trade had ever reached the excellence to which it is now improved, had its professors looked upon it with the eyes of indifferent spectators; the advances, from the first rude essays, must have been made by men who valued themselves for performances, for which scarce any other would be persuaded to esteem them.

It is pleasing to contemplate a manufacture rising gradually from its first mean state by the successive labours of innumerable minds; to consider the first hollow trunk of an oak in which, perhaps, the shepherd could scarce venture to cross a brook swelled with a shower, enlarged at last into a ship of war, attacking fortresses, terrifying nations, setting storms and billows at defiance, and visiting the remotest parts of the globe. And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat, melted into a metaline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined, that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniences of life, as would in time constitute a great part of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of the wind; which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

This passion for the honour of a profession, like that for the grandeur of our own country, is to be regulated, not extinguished. Every man, from the highest to the lowest station, ought to warm his heart and animate his endeavours with the hopes of being useful to the world, by advancing the art which it is his lot to exercise, and for that end he must necessarily consider the whole extent of its application, and the whole weight of its importance. But let him not too readily imagine that another is ill employed, because, for want of fuller knowledge of his business, he is not able to comprehend its dignity. Every man ought to endeavour at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity. The philosopher may very justly be delighted with the extent of his views, and the artificer with the readiness of his hands; but let the one remember, that, without mechanical performances, refined speculation is an empty dream; and the other, that, without theoretical reasoning, dexterity is little more than a brute instinct.

No. 10.] SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 1750.

Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo.

VIRG

For trifling sports I quitted grave affairs.

THE number of correspondents which increases every day upon me, shows that my paper is at least distinguished from the common productions of the press. It is no less a proof of eminence to have many enemies than many friends; and I look upon every letter, whether it contains encomiums or reproaches, as an equal attestation of rising credit. The only pain, which I can feel from my correspondence, is the fear of disgusting those, whose letters I shall neglect; and therefore I take this opportunity of reminding them, that in disapproving their attempts, whenever it may happen, I only return the treatment which I often receive. Besides, many particular motives influence a writer, known only to himself, or his private friends; and it may be justly concluded, that not all letters which are postponed are rejected, nor all that are rejected, critically condemned.

Having thus eased my heart of the only apprehension that sat heavy on it, I can please myself with the candour of Benevolus, who encourages me to proceed, without sinking under the anger of Flirtilla, who quarrels with me for being old and ugly, and for wanting both activity of body and sprightliness of mind; feeds her monkey with my lucubrations, and refuses any reconciliation till I have appeared in vindication of masquerades. That she may not however imagine me without support, and left to rest wholly upon my own fortitude, I shall now publish some letters which I have received from men as well dressed, and as handsome, as her favourite; and others from ladies, whom I sincerely believe as young, as rich, as gay, as pretty, as fashionable, and as often toasted and treated as herself.

"A SET of candid readers send their respects to the Rambler, and acknowledge his merit in so well beginning a work that may be of public benefit. But, superior as his genius is to the impertinences of a trifling age, they cannot but have a wish, that he would condescend to the weakness of minds softened by perpetual amusements, and now and then throw in, like his predecessors, some papers of a gay and humourous turn. Too fair a field now lies open, with too plentiful a harvest of follies! let the cheerful Thalia put in her sickle, and, singing at her work, deck her hair with red and blue."

"A LADY sends her compliments to the Rambler, and desires to know by what other name she may direct to him; what are his set of friends, his amusements; what his way of thinking, with regard to the living world, and its ways; in short, whether he is a person now alive, and in town? If he be, she will do herself the honour to write to him pretty often, and hopes, from time to time, to be the better for his advice and animadversions; for his animadversions on her neighbours at least. But, if he is a mere essayist, and troubles not himself with the manners of the age, she is sorry to tell him, that even the genius and correctness of an Addison will not secure him from neglect."

No man is so much abstracted from common

life, as not to feel a particular pleasure from the regard of the female world; the candid writers of the first billet will not be offended, that my haste to satisfy a lady has hurried their address too soon out of my mind, and that I refer them for a reply to some future paper, in order to tell this curious inquirer after my other name, the answer of a philosopher to a man, who meeting him in the street, desired to see what he carried under his cloak; "I carry it there," says he, "that you may not see it." But, though she is never to know my name, she may often see my face; for I am of her opinion, that a diurnal writer ought to view the world, and that he who neglects his contemporaries, may be with justice neglected by them.

"Lady Racket sends compliments to the Rambler, and lets him know she shall have cards at her house, every Sunday, the remainder of the season, where he will be sure of meeting all the good company in town. By this means she hopes to see his papers interspersed with living characters. She longs to see the torch of Truth produced at an assembly, and to admire the charming lustre it will throw on the jewels, complexions, and behaviour, of every dear creature there."

It is a rule with me to receive every offer with the same civility as it is made; and, therefore, though Lady Racket may have had some reason to guess, that I seldom frequent card-tables on Sundays, I shall not insist upon an exception, which may to her appear of so little force. My business has been to view, as opportunity was offered, every place in which mankind was to be seen; but at card-tables, however brilliant, I have always thought my visit lost, for I could know nothing of the company, but their clothes and their faces. I saw their looks clouded at the beginning of every game with a uniform solicitude, now and then in its progress varied with a short triumph, at one time wrinkled with cunning, at another deadened with despondency, or by accident flushed with rage at the unskilful or unlucky play of a partner. From such assemblies, in whatever humour I happened to enter them, I was quickly forced to retire; they were too trifling for me when I was grave, and too dull when I was cheerful.

Yet I cannot but value myself upon this token of regard from a lady who is not afraid to stand before the torch of Truth. Let her not, however, consult her curiosity more than her prudence, but reflect a moment on the fate of Semele, who might have lived the favourite of Jupiter, if she could have been content without his thunder. It is dangerous for mortal beauty, or terrestrial virtue, to be examined by too strong a light. The torch of Truth shows much that we cannot, and all that we would not see. In a face dimpled with smiles, it has often discovered malevolence and envy, and detected, under jewels and brocade, the frightful forms of poverty and distress. A fine hand of cards have changed before it into a thousand spectres of sickness, misery and vexation; and immense sums of money, while the winner counted them with transport, have at the first glimpse of this unwelcome lustre vanished from before him. If her ladyship therefore designs to continue her assembly, I would advise her to shun such dangerous experiments, to satisfy herself with common appearances, and to light up her apartments rather with myrtle than the torch of Truth.

"A modest young man sends his service to the author of the Rambler, and will be very willing to assist him in his work, but is sadly afraid of being discouraged by having his first essay rejected, a disgrace he has wofully experienced in every offer he had made of it to every new writer of every new paper; but he comforts himself by thinking, without vanity, that this has been from a peculiar favour of the Muses, who saved his performance from being buried in trash, and reserved it to appear with lustre in the Rambler."

I am equally a friend to modesty and enterprise; and therefore shall think it an honour to correspond with a young man who possesses both in so eminent a degree. Youth is, indeed the time in which these qualities ought chiefly to be found; modesty suits well with inexperience and enterprise with health and vigour, and an extensive prospect of life. One of my predecessors has justly observed, that, though modesty has an amiable and winning appearance, it ought not to hinder the exertion of the active powers, but that a man should show under his blushes a latent resolution. This point of perfection, nice as it is, my correspondent seems to have attained. That he is modest, his own declaration may evince; and, I think, the *latent resolution* may be discovered in his letter by an acute observer. I will advise him, since he so well deserves my precepts, not to be discouraged though the Rambler should prove equally envious, or tasteless, with the rest of this fraternity. If his paper is refused, the presses of England are open, let him try the judgment of the public. If, as it has sometimes happened in general combinations against merit, he cannot persuade the world to buy his works, he may present them to his friends; and if his friends are seized with the epidemical infatuation, and cannot find his genius, or will not confess it, let him then refer his cause to posterity, and reserve his labours for a wiser age.

Thus have I despatched some of my correspondents in the usual manner, with fair words and general civility. But to Flirtilla, the gay Flirtilla, what shall I reply? Unable as I am to fly at her command, over land and seas, or to supply her from week to week with the fashions of Paris, or the intrigues of Madrid, I am yet not willing to incur her further displeasure, and would save my papers from her monkey on any reasonable terms. By what propitiation, therefore, may I atone for my former gravity, and open without trembling, the future letters of this sprightly persecutor? To write in defence of masquerades is no easy task; yet something difficult and daring may well be required, as the price of so important an approbation. I therefore, consulted, in this great emergency, a man of high reputation in gay life, who having added, to his other acomplishments, no mean proficiency in the minute philosophy, after the fifth perusal of her letter, broke out with rapture into these words: "And can you, Mr. Rambler, stand out against this charming creature? Let her know, at least, that from this moment Nigrinus devotes his life and his labours to her service. Is there

any stubborn prejudice of education, that stands between thee and the most amiable of mankind? Behold, Flirtilla, at thy feet, a man grown gray in the study of those noble arts by which right and wrong may be confounded; by which reason may be blinded, when we have a mind to escape from her inspection; and caprice and appetite instated in uncontrolled command and boundless dominion! Such a casuist may surely engage, with certainty of success, in vindication of an entertainment, which in an instant gives confidence to the timorous, and kindles ardour in the cold; an entertainment where the vigilance of jealousy has so often been eluded, and the virgin is set free from the necessity of languishing in silence; where all the outworks of chastity are at once demolished; where the heart is laid open without a blush; where bashfulness may survive virtue, and no wish is crushed under the frown of modesty. Far weaker influence than Flirtilla's might gain over an advocate for such amusements. It was declared by Pompey, that if the commonwealth was violated, he could stamp with his foot, and raise an army out of the ground; if the rights of pleasure are again invaded, let but Flirtilla crack her fan, neither pens nor swords shall be wanting at the summons; the wit and the colonel shall march out at her command, and neither law nor reason shall stand before us."*

No. 11.] TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 1750.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tristes ut iræ. HOR.

Yet O! remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor *Pythian Phœbus* from his inmost shrine,
Nor *Dindymene*, nor her priests possess'd,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger. FRANCIS.

THE maxim which Periander of Corinth, one of the seven sages of Greece, left as a memorial of his knowledge and benevolence, was χόλου κράτει, *Be master of thy anger*. He considered anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of public happiness and private tranquillity, and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import, protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evils to which the life of man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle are left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantic and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject, is such as makes those who indulge it more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto, which characterises this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes, as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals known, and contentedly known, by the appellation of *passionate men*, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on every slight occasion, and to vent their rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces and licentious reproaches. Their rage, indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury, and protestations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamours, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore not always treated with the severity which their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence, that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indignation, that men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment; wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience, and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, if it once breaks loose from reason, counteracts its own purposes. A passionate man, upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride, when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were borne, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occasions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence, must show him that he is mean enough to be driven from his

*The four billets in this paper were written by Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone, who survived this work more than half a century, and died Dec. 25, 1801. See an account of her in the Preface to the Adventurer, "British Essayists," vol 23.—C.

post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagances, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering, that at least he made himself heard, that he had the power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domestics; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance; and therefore they endeavour, by their fury, to fright away contempt from before them, when they know it must follow them behind, and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things, that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconveniences; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult, and bluster, alter any one's opinion of his understanding, or gain influence, except over those whom fortune or nature have made his dependents. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children, and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have the comfort at last of thinking that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who could not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality, and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance, will teach in a short time, to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation, and unable to retain his resentment, till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate by some sudden transport his dearest friend; or break out, upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solicitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyric on the Earl of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any indignities which he made them suffer. This is the round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong, because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise, or his happiness; he only adds deliberate to hasty folly, aggravates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusements pall with frequent repetition, his occasional rage sinks by decay of strength into peevishness; that peevishness, for want of novelty and variety, becomes habitual; the world falls off from around him, and he is left, as Homer expresses it *φθινυθων φλον κηρ* to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

No. 12.] SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 1750.

——Miserum parva stipe focillat, ut pudibundos
Exercere sales inter convivia possit.——
——Tu mitis, et acri
Asperitate carens, positoque per omnia fastu
Inter ut æquales unus numeraris amicos,
Obsequiumque doces, et amorem quæris amando.
LUCANUS *ad* PISONEM.

Unlike the ribald whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and reverence reverence gains.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty with which the life of a man of letters perhaps does not often make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence,

has been lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful lawsuit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant inquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time, I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be, for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore, I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on Madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the other end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come off? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—A great misfortune indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a-day! So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman I suppose: such gentlewomen! Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your inquiry—Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, Pray, Mrs. gentlewoman, troop down stairs.—You may believe I obeyed her.

returned and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office, to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours, was at last admitted to the top of the stairs, when she came out of her room, with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. So, young woman, you want a place; whence do you come?—From the country, Madam.—Yes, they all come out of the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard? Where do you lodge?—At the Seven-Dials.—What, you have heard of the foundling-house! Upon this they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk, I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that showed me in. Is this the lady that wants a place? Pray what place would you have, Miss? a maid of honour's place? Servants now-a-days!—Madam, I heard you wanted—Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself? A pretty servant indeed! I should be afraid to speak to her. I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting—a servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house. You are ready dressed, the taverns will be open.

I went to inquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up, however. Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better.—Madam. I have another, but being obliged to walk.—Then these are your manners, with your blushes and your courtesies, to come to me in your worst gown.—Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other.—Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming. I could not let such a drab come near me. Here, you girl that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me. Such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk.

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived? And upon my answer, was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and

go away laughing.—Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again.—At sunset the two first days I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow, and on the third, that her woman stayed.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways: that if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many that had refused places, sell their clothes and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routes at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room, in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly called out, after a whisper, Stand facing the light, that one may see you.—I changed my place and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment; for at every look they whispered and laughed with the most violent agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, Is that colour your own, child?—Yes, says the lady, if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth.—This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to inquire what I could do? But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape. Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum? You would find your tongue, I suppose, in the kitchen.—No, no, says Mr. Courtly, the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder—Come, child, hold up your head; What! you have stole nothing.—Not yet, says the lady, but she hopes to steal your heart quickly. Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself: Stole! no—but if I had her, I should watch her: for that downcast eye—why cannot you look people in the face?—Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribands before they were left off by her lady.—Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury?—Insult! says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting! What will this world come to, if a gentleman may not jest with a servant! Well, such servants! pray be gone, and see when you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted!—a fine time!—Insulted! Get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you.

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the wagon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for, like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for, with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story; which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to show my gratitude better than by giving this account to the Rambler.

ZOSIMA.

No. 13.] TUESDAY, MAY 1, 1750.

Commissumque teges, et vino tortus et ira.— HOR.

And let not wine or anger wrest
Th' intrusted secret from your breast.— FRANCIS.

It is related by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived an invincible contempt of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy; for they thought that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues at least were in his power, and though he perhaps could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In forming this opinion of the easiness of secrecy, they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity, and to have conceived the man whom they thus censured, not frighted by menaces to reveal, or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some other motive equally trifling, to lay open his heart without reflection and to let whatever he knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it. Whether, by their settled and avowed scorn of thoughtless talkers, the Persians were able to diffuse to any great extent the virtue of taciturnity, we are hindered by the distance of those times from being able to discover, there being very few memoirs remaining of the court of Persepolis, nor any distinct accounts handed down to us of their office-

clerks, their ladies of the bed-chamber, their attorneys, their chamber-maids, or their footmen.

In these latter ages, though the old animosity against a prattler is still retained, it appears wholly to have lost its effect upon the conduct of mankind; for secrets are so seldom kept, that it may with some reason be doubted, whether the ancients were not mistaken in their first postulate, whether the quality of retention be so generally bestowed, and whether a secret has not some subtle volatility, by which it escapes imperceptibly at the smallest vent, or some power of fermentation, by which it expands itself so as to burst the heart that will not give it way.

Those that study either the body or the mind of man, very often find the most specious and pleasing theory falling under the weight of contrary experience; and, instead of gratifying their vanity by inferring effects from causes, they are always reduced at last to conjecture causes from effects. That it is easy to be secret, the speculatist can demonstrate in his retreat, and therefore thinks himself justified in placing confidence; the man of the world knows, that, whether difficult or not, it is uncommon, and therefore finds himself rather inclined to search after the reason of this universal failure in one of the most important duties of society.

The vanity of being known to be trusted with a secret, is generally one of the chief motives to disclose it; for however absurd it may be thought to boast an honour by an act which shows that it was conferred without merit, yet most men seem rather inclined to confess the want of virtue than of importance, and more willingly show their influence, though at the expense of their probity, than glide through life with no other pleasure than the private consciousness of fidelity; which, while it is preserved, must be without praise, except from the single person who tries and knows it.

There are many ways of telling a secret, by which a man exempts himself from the reproaches of his conscience, and gratifies his pride, without suffering himself to believe that he impairs his virtue. He tells the private affairs of his patron, or his friend, only to those from whom he would not conceal his own; he tells them to those who have no temptation to betray the trust, or with a denunciation of a certain forfeiture of his friendship, if he discovers that they become public.

Secrets are very frequently told in the first ardour of kindness, or of love, for the sake of proving, by so important a sacrifice, sincerity or tenderness; but with this motive, though it be strong in itself, vanity concurs, since every man desires to be most esteemed by those whom he loves, or with whom he converses, with whom he passes his hours of pleasure, and to whom he retires from business and from care.

When the discovery of secrets is under consideration, there is always a distinction carefully to be made between our own and those of another; those of which we are fully masters, as they affect only our own interest, and those which are reposited with us in trust, and involve the happiness or convenience of such as we have no right to expose to hazard. To tell our own secrets is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are intrusted is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

There have, indeed, been some enthusiastic and irrational zealots for friendship, who have maintained, and perhaps believed, that one friend has a right to all that is in possession of another; and that, therefore, it is a violation of kindness to exempt any secret from this boundless confidence. Accordingly, a late female minister of state* has been shameless enough to inform the world, that she used, when she wanted to extract any thing from her sovereign, to remind her of Montaigne's reasoning, who has determined, that to tell a secret to a friend is no breach of fidelity, because the number of persons trusted is not multiplied, a man and his friend being virtually the same.

That such a fallacy could be imposed upon any human understanding, or that an author could have advanced a position so remote from truth and reason, any other ways than as a declaimer, to show to what extent he could stretch his imagination, and with what strength he could press his principle, would scarcely have been credible, had not this lady kindly shown us how far weakness may be deluded, or indolence amused. But since it appears, that even this sophistry, has been able, with the help of a strong desire, to repose in quiet upon the understanding of another to mislead honest intentions, and an understanding not contemptible,† it may not be superfluous to remark, that those things which are common among friends are only such as either possesses in his own right, and can alienate or destroy without injury to any other person. Without this limitation, confidence must run on without end, the second person may tell the secret to the third, upon the same principle as he received it from the first, and a third may hand it forward to a fourth, till at last it is told in the round of friendship to them from whom it was the first intention to conceal it.

The confidence which Caius has of the faithfulness of Titius is nothing more than an opinion which himself cannot know to be true, and which Claudius, who first tells his secret to Caius, may know to be false; and therefore the trust is transferred by Caius, if he reveal what has been told him, to one from whom the person originally concerned would have withheld it, and whatever may be the event, Caius has hazarded the happiness of his friend, without necessity and without permission, and has put that trust in the hand of fortune which was given only to virtue.

All the arguments upon which a man who is telling the private affairs of another may ground his confidence of security, he must upon reflection know to be uncertain, because he finds them without effect upon himself. When he is imagining that Titius will be cautious, from a regard to his interest, his reputation, or his duty, he ought to reflect that he is himself at that instant acting in opposition to all these reasons, and revealing what interest, reputation, and duty, direct him to conceal.

Every one feels that in his own case he should consider the man incapable of trust, who believed himself at liberty to tell whatever he knew to the

* Sarah, Dutchess of Marlborough.—C.

† That of Queen Anne.—C.

first whom he should conclude deserving of his own confidence; therefore Caius, in admitting Titius to the affairs imparted only to himself must know that he violates his faith, since he acts contrary to the intention of Claudius, to whom that faith was given. For promises of friendship are like all others, useless and vain, unless they are made in some known sense, adjusted and acknowledged by both parties.

I am not ignorant that many questions may be started relating to the duty of secrecy, where the affairs are of public concern; where subsequent reasons may arise to alter the appearance and nature of the trust; that the manner in which the secret was told may change the degree of obligation, and that the principles upon which a man is chosen for a confidant may not always equally constrain him. But these scruples, if not too intricate, are of too extensive consideration for my present purpose, nor are they such as generally occur in common life; and though casuistical knowledge be useful in proper hands, yet it ought by no means to be carelessly exposed, since most will use it rather to lull than to awaken their own consciences; and the threads of reasoning, on which truth is suspended, are frequently drawn to such subtilty, that common eyes cannot perceive, and common sensibility cannot feel them.

The whole doctrine as well as practice of secrecy, is so perplexing and dangerous, that, next to him who is compelled to trust, I think him unhappy who is chosen to be trusted; for he is often involved in scruples without the liberty of calling in the help of any other understanding; he is frequently drawn into guilt under the appearance of friendship and honesty; and sometimes subjected to suspicion, by the treachery of others, who are engaged without his knowledge in the same schemes; for he that has one confidant has generally more, and when he is at last betrayed, is in doubt on whom he shall fix the crime.

The rules therefore that I shall propose concerning secrecy, and from which I think it not safe to deviate, without long and exact deliberation, are—Never to solicit the knowledge of a secret. Not willingly, nor without many limitations, to accept such confidence when it is offered. When a secret is once admitted, to consider the trust as of a very high nature, important as society, and sacred as truth, and therefore not to be violated for any incidental convenience, or slight appearance of contrary fitness.

No. 14.] SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1750.

——Nil fuit unquam
Sic impar Sibi—— HOR.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.
FRANCIS.

AMONG the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity: the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

It has long been the custom of the oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer, who having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shown much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the entanglements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered, that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life has his own passions and those of others to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniences which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to choose before he can examine; he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay

down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiassed, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summits of speculative virtue.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavours are to be directed; and he that is the most deficient in the duties of life, makes some atonement for his faults, if he warns others against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practise; since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage, or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive to amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing that they do not know it; those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone, they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavouring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little increase or lessen the obligations of their dictates; argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should show that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility. Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others, because he writes better; nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence, beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometime pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest, by some flagitious and shameful actions, he should bring piety into disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not enforce his own maxims by his domestic character, to conceal his name that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit, and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters, for the most part spends, in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects: or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the conscIousness of his merit; he is either dissipated by the awe of company, and unable to recollect his reading, and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, disabled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds; and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please, by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception, and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and cloud- with smoke.

No. 15.] Tuesday, May 8, 1751.

Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando Major avaritiæ patuit sinus? Alea quando Hos animos? JUV.

What age so large a crop of vices bore?
Or when was avarice extended more?
When were the dice with more profusion thrown?
DRYDEN.

There is no grievance, public or private, of which, since I took upon me the office of a periodical monitor, I have received so many or so earnest complaints, as of the predominance of play; of a fatal passion for cards and dice, which seems to have overturned, not only the ambition of excellence, but the desire of pleasure; to have extinguished the flames of the lover, as well as of the patriot; and threatens, in its further progress, to destroy all distinctions, both of rank and sex, to crush all emulation but that of fraud, to corrupt all those classes of our people whose ancestors have, by their virtue, their industry, or their parsimony, given them the power of living in extravagance, idleness, and vice, and to leave them without knowledge, but of the modish games, and without wishes, but for lucky hands.

I have found, by long experience, that there are few enterprises so hopeless as contests with the fashion, in which the opponents are not only made confident by their numbers, and strong by their union, but are hardened by contempt of their antagonist, whom they always look upon as a wretch of low notions, contracted views, mean conversation, and narrow fortune, who envies the elevations which he cannot reach, who would gladly embitter the happiness which his inelegance or indigence deny him to partake, and who has no other end in his advice than to revenge his own mortification by hindering those whom their birth and taste have set above him, from the enjoyment of their superiority, and bringing them down to a level with himself.

Though I have never found myself much affected by this formidable censure, which I have incurred often enough to be acquainted with its full force, yet I shall, in some measure, obviate it on this occasion, by offering very little in my own name, either of argument or entreaty, since those who suffer by this general infatuation may be supposed best able to relate its effects.

Sir,

There seems to be so little knowledge left in the world, and so little of that reflection practised, by which knowledge is to be gained, that I am in doubt, whether I shall be understood, when I complain of want of opportunity for thinking; or whether a condemnation, which at present seems irreversible, to perpetual ignorance, will raise any compassion, either in you or your readers: yet I will venture to lay my state before you, because I believe it is natural to most minds, to take some pleasure in complaining of evils, of which they have no reason to be ashamed.

I am the daughter of a man of great fortune, whose diffidence of mankind, and perhaps the pleasure of continual accumulation, incline him to reside upon his own estate, and to educate his children in his own house, where I was bred, if not with the most brilliant examples of virtue before my eyes, at least remote enough from any incitements to vice; and, wanting neither leisure nor books, nor the acquaintance of some persons of learning in the neighbourhood, I endeavoured to acquire such knowledge as might most recommend me to esteem, and thought myself able to support a conversation upon most of the subjects, which my sex and condition made it proper for me to understand.

I had, besides my knowledge, as my mamma and my maid told me, a very fine face and elegant shape, and with all these advantages had been seventeen months the reigning toast for twelve miles round, and never came to the monthly assembly, but I heard the old ladies that sat by wishing that *it might end well*, and their daughters criticising my air, my features, or my dress.

You know, Mr. Rambler, that ambition is natural to youth, and curiosity to understanding, and therefore will hear, without wonder, that I was desirous to extend my victories over those who might give more honour to the conqueror; and that I found in a country life a continual repetition of the same pleasures, which was not sufficient to fill up the mind for the present, or raise any expectations of the future; and I will confess to you, that I was impatient for a sight of the town, and filled my thoughts with the discoveries which I should make, the triumphs that I should obtain, and the praises that I should receive.

At last the time came. My aunt, whose husband has a seat in Parliament, and a place at court, buried her only child, and sent for me to supply the loss. The hope that I should so far insinuate myself into their favour, as to obtain a considerable augmentation to my fortune, procured me every convenience for my departure, with great expedition; and I could not, amidst all my transports, forbear some indignation to see with what readiness the natural guardians of my virtue sold me to a state, which they thought more hazardous than it really was, as soon as a new accession of fortune glittered in their eyes.

Three days I was upon the road, and on the fourth morning my heart danced at the sight of London. I was set down at my aunt's and entered upon the scene of action. I expected now, from the age and experience of my aunt, some prudential lessons; but, after the first civilities and first tears were over, was told what pity it was to have kept so fine a girl so long in the country; for the people who did not begin young, seldom dealt their cards handsomely, or played them tolerably.

Young persons are commonly inclined to slight the remarks and counsels of their elders. I smiled, perhaps, with too much contempt, and was upon the point of telling her that my time had not been passed in such trivial attainments. But I soon found that things are to be estimated, not by the importance of their effects, but the frequency of their use.

A few days after, my aunt gave me notice, that some company, which she had been six weeks in collecting, was to meet that evening, and she expected a finer assembly than had been seen all the winter. She expressed this in the jargon of a gamester, and, when I asked an explication of her terms of art, wondered where I had lived. I had already found my aunt so incapable of any rational conclusion, and so ignorant of every thing, whether great or little, that I had lost all

regard to her opinion, and dressed myself with great expectations of an opportunity to display my charms among rivals, whose competition would not dishonour me. The company came in, and after the cursory compliments of salutation, alike easy to the lowest and the highest understanding, what was the result? The cards were broken open, the parties were formed, the whole night passed in a game, upon which the young and old were equally employed; nor was I able to attract an eye, or gain an ear, but being compelled to play without skill I perpetually embarrassed my partner, and soon perceived the contempt of the whole table gathering upon me.

I cannot but suspect, Sir, that this odious fashion is produced by a conspiracy of the old, the ugly, and the ignorant, against the young and beautiful, the witty and the gay, as a contrivance to level all distinctions of nature and of art, to confound the world in a chaos of folly, and to take from those who could outshine them all the advantages of mind and body, to withhold youth from its natural pleasures, deprive wit of its influence, and beauty of its charms, to fix those hearts upon money, to which love has hitherto been entitled, to sink life into a tedious uniformity, and to allow it no other hopes or fears, but those of robbing, and being robbed.

Be pleased, Sir, to inform those of my sex who have minds capable of nobler sentiments, that, if they will unite in vindication of their pleasures and their prerogatives, they may fix a time, at which cards shall cease to be in fashion, or be left only to those who have neither beauty to be loved, nor spirit to be feared; neither knowledge to teach, nor modesty to learn; and who, having passed their youth in vice, are justly condemned to spend their age in folly.

I am, Sir, &c. CLEORA.

SIR,

VEXATION will burst my heart, if I do not give it vent. As you publish a paper, I insist upon it that you insert this in your next, as ever you hope for the kindness and encouragement of any woman of taste, spirit, and virtue. I would have it published to the world, how deserving wives are used by imperious coxcombs, that henceforth no woman may marry who has not the patience of Grizzel. Nay, if even Grizzel had been married to a gamester, her temper would never have held out. A wretch that loses his good humour and humanity along with his money, and will not allow enough from his own extravagances to support a woman of fashion in the necessary amusements of life! Why does not he employ his wise head to make a figure in parliament, raise an estate, and get a title? That would be fitter for the master of a family, than rattling a noisy dice-box; and then he might indulge his wife in a few slight expenses and elegant diversions.

What if I was unfortunate at brag? should he not have stayed to see how luck would turn another time? Instead of that, what does he do, but picks a quarrel, upbraids me with loss of beauty, abuses my acquaintance, ridicules my play, and insults my understanding; says forsooth, that women have not heads enough to play with any thing but dolls, and that they should be employed in things proportionable to their understanding, keep at home, and mind family affairs.

I do stay at home, Sir, and all the world knows I am at home every Sunday. I have had six routes this winter, and sent out ten packs of cards in invitations to private parties. As for management, I am sure he cannot call me extravagant, or say I do not mind my family. The children are out at nurse in villages as cheap as any two little brats can be kept, nor have I ever seen them since; so he has no trouble about them. The servants live at board wages. My own dinners come from the Thatched House; and I have never paid a penny for any thing I have bought since I was married. As for play, I do think I may, indeed, indulge in that, now I am my own mistress. Papa made me drudge at whist till I was tired of it; and, far from wanting a head, Mr Hoyle, when he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of his best scholars. I thought then with myself, that, if once I was at liberty, I would leave play, and take to reading romances, things so forbidden at our house, and so railed at, that it was impossible not to fancy them very charming. Most fortunately, to save me from absolute undutifulness, just as I was married, came dear brag into fashion, and ever since it has been the joy of my life; so easy, so cheerful and careless, so void of thought, and so genteel! Who can help loving it? Yet the perfidious thing has used me very ill of late, and to-morrow I should have changed it for faro. But, oh! this detestable to-morrow, a thing always expected, and never found.——Within these few hours must I be dragged into the country. The wretch, Sir, left me in a fit, which his threatenings had occasioned, and unmercifully ordered a post-chaise. Stay I cannot, for money I have none, and credit I cannot get.—But I will make the monkey play with me at picquet upon the road for all I want. I am almost sure to beat him, and his debts of honour I know he will pay. Then who can tell but I may still come back and conquer Lady Packer; Sir, you need not print this last scheme; and, upon second thoughts, you may.——Oh, distraction! the post chaise is at the door, Sir, publish what you will, only let it be printed without a name.

No. 16.] SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1750.

——Torrens dicendi copia multis,
Et sua mortifera est facundia—— JUV.

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd.

DRYDEN.

SIR,

I AM the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice in a late paper; and as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniences which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

——Facilis descensus Averni,
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis. VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent and easy is the way.

DRYDEN.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for an impression of several thousands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the printing-house, and continually urged the workmen, to haste, by solicitations, promises, and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded, by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets; and from the night, sleep was generally banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing nearer.

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and, in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable, and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state, by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me; I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked into the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon, as more eminently beautiful than the rest; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegancies, I pointed out to them, which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments, and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner, the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I therefore persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and choose some other subject, on which I might share in their conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topic, and I was obliged to stifle, with claret, that praise, which neither my modesty could hinder, nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing myself exalted above the greatest names, dead and living, of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five-and-forty bottles of champaign.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing, upon equal terms, with the rest of the world. As soon as I enter the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal, sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such, that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts, and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrors of my friends, I have been cautious, since the appearance of my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may sometimes have laid down my opinion, in a manner that showed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments; and, indeed, I did indulge myself for two days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when the company began to lose themselves in absurdities, or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss. But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, nobody is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendency.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk without much thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of error to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended, when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect, whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This, Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets broken open, at the instigation of piratical booksellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent that there are many prints now sold in the shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of

sitting for that purpose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that showed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house, but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painters are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat over my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confound them; for you know it is not fair to sell my face, without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for my face as for my papers, which I dare neither carry with me nor leave behind. I have indeed, taken some measures for their preservation, having put them in an iron chest, and fixed a padlock upon my closet. I change my lodgings five times a week, and always remove at the dead of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having given too great proofs of a predominant genius, in the solitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a miser, and the caution of an outlaw; afraid to show my face lest it should be copied; afraid to speak, lest I should injure my character, and to write, lest my correspondents should publish my letters; always uneasy lest my servants should steal my papers for the sake of money, or my friends for that of the public. This it is to soar above the rest of mankind; and this representation I lay before you, that I may be informed how to divest myself of the laurels which are so cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to the enjoyment of that quiet, from which I find a writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

MISELLUS.

No. 17.] TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1750.

——Me non oracula certum,
Sed mors certa facit. LUCAN.

Let those weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling priests for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fix'd, my certain soul, from doubt has freed.
ROWE.

IT is recorded of some eastern monarch, that he kept an officer in his house, whose employment it was to remind him of his mortality, by calling out every morning, at a stated hour, *Remember, prince, that thou shalt die!* And the contemplation of the frailness and uncertainty of our present state appeared of so much importance to Solon of Athens, that he left this precept to future ages: *Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life.*

A frequent and attentive prospect of that moment, which must put a period to all our schemes, and deprive us of all our acquisitions, is indeed of the utmost efficacy to the just and rational regulation of our lives; nor would ever any thing wicked, or often any thing absurd, be undertaken or prosecuted by him who should begin every day with a serious reflection that he is born to die.

The disturbers of our happiness, in this world, are our desires, our griefs, and our fears; and to all these, the consideration of mortality is a certain and adequate remedy. Think, says Epictetus, frequently on poverty, banishment, and death, and thou wilt then never indulge violent desires or give up thy heart to mean sentiments, *οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὔτε ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.*

That the maxim of Epictetus is founded on just observation will easily be granted, when we reflect, how that vehemence of eagerness after the common objects of pursuit is kindled in our minds. We represent to ourselves the pleasures of some future possession, and suffer our thoughts to dwell attentively upon it, till it has wholly engrossed the imagination, and permits us not to conceive any happiness but its attainment, or any misery but its loss; every other satisfaction which the bounty of Providence has scattered over life is neglected as inconsiderable, in comparison of the great object which we have placed before us, and is thrown from us as incumbering our activity, or trampled under foot as standing in our way.

Every man has experienced how much of this ardour has been remitted, when a sharp or tedious sickness has set death before his eyes. The extensive influence of greatness, the glitter of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance of supplicants, have appeared vain and empty things, when the last hour seemed to be approaching; and the same appearance they would always have, if the same thought was always predominant. We should then find the absurdity of stretching out our arms incessantly to grasp that which we cannot keep, and wearing out our lives in endeavours to add new turrets to the fabric of ambition, when the foundation itself is shaking, and the ground on which it stands is mouldering away.

All envy is proportionate to desire; we are uneasy at the attainments of another, according as we think our own happiness would be advanced by the addition of that which he withholds from us; and therefore whatever depresses immoderate wishes, will, at the same time, set the heart free from the corrosion of envy, and exempt us from that vice which is, above most others, tormenting to ourselves, hateful to the world, and productive of mean artifices and sordid projects. He that considers how soon he must close his life, will find nothing of so much importance as to close it well; and will, therefore, look with indifference upon whatever is useless to that purpose. Whoever reflects frequently upon the uncertainty of his own duration, will find out, that the state of others is not more permanent, and that what can confer nothing on himself very desirable, cannot so much improve the condition of a rival, as to make him much superior to those from whom he has carried the prize, a prize too mean to deserve a very obstinate opposition.

Even grief, that passion to which the virtuous and tender mind is particularly subject, will be obviated or alleviated by the same thoughts. It will be obviated, if all the blessings of our condition are enjoyed with a constant sense of this uncertain tenure. If we remember, that whatever we possess is to be in our hands but a very little time, and that the little, which our most lively hopes can promise us, may be made less by ten

thousand accidents; we shall not much repine at a loss, of which we cannot estimate the value, but of which, though we are not able to tell the least amount, we know, with sufficient certainty, the greatest, and are convinced that the greatest is not much to be regretted.

But, if any passion has so much usurped our understanding, as not to suffer us to enjoy advantages with the moderation prescribed by reason, it is not too late to apply this remedy, when we find ourselves sinking under sorrow, and inclined to pine for that which is irrecoverably vanished. We may then usefully revolve the uncertainty of our own condition, and the folly of lamenting that from which, if it had stayed a little longer, we should ourselves have been taken away.

With regard to the sharpest and most melting sorrow, that which arises from the loss of those whom we have loved with tenderness, it may be observed, that friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time mourn for the other's death: and this grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; for the pain, whatever it be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.

Nor is fear, the most overbearing and resistless of all our passions, less to be temperated by this universal medicine of the mind. The frequent contemplation of death, as it shows the vanity of all human good, discovers likewise the lightness of all terrestrial evil, which certainly can last no longer than the subject upon which it acts; and, according to the old observation, must be shorter, as it is more violent. The most cruel calamity which misfortune can produce, must, by the necessity of nature, be quickly at an end. The soul cannot long be held in prison, but will fly away, and leave a lifeless body to human malice.

--- Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.

And soaring mocks the broken frame below.

The utmost that we can threaten to one another is that death, which, indeed, we may precipitate, but cannot retard, and from which, therefore, it cannot become a wise man to buy a reprieve at the expense of virtue, since he knows not how small a portion of time he can purchase, but knows, that whether short or long, it will be made less valuable by the remembrance of the price at which it has been obtained. He is sure that he destroys his happiness, but is not sure that he lengthens his life.

The known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius, and most active industry, to extend its effects beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world, is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science, has been the folly of literary heroes; and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining a species of honour, which the eternal laws of Providence have placed beyond the reach of man.

The miscarriages of the great designs of princes are recorded in the histories of the world, but are of little use to the bulk of mankind, who seem very little interested in admonitions against errors which they cannot commit. But the fate of learned ambition is a proper subject for every scholar to consider; for who has not had occasion to regret the dissipation of great abilities in a boundless multiplicity of pursuits, to lament the sudden desertion of excellent designs, upon the offer of some other subject made inviting by its novelty, and to observe the inaccuracy and deficiencies, of works left unfinished by too great an extension of the plan?

It is always pleasing to observe, how much more our minds can conceive, than our bodies can perform! yet it is our duty, while we continue in this complicated state, to regulate one part of our composition by some regard to the other. We are not to indulge our corporeal appetites with pleasures that impair our intellectual vigour, nor gratify our minds with schemes which we know our lives must fail in attempting to execute. The uncertainty of our duration ought at once to set bounds to our designs, and add incitements to our industry; and when we find ourselves inclined either to immensity in our schemes, or sluggishness in our endeavours, we may either check or animate ourselves, by recollecting, with the father of physic, *that art is long, and life is short.*

No. 18.] SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1750

Illic matre carentibus,
Privignis mulier temperat innocens,
Nec dotata regit virum
Conjux, nec nitido fidit adultero:
Dos est magna parentium
Virtus, et metuens alterius tori
Certo fœdere castitas. HOR.

Not there the guiltless step-dame knows
The baleful draught for orphans to compose;
No wife high portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenced lover's faithless vows:
The lovers there for dowry claim
The father's virtue, and the spotless fame,
Which dares not break the nuptial tie.
FRANCIS.

THERE is no observation more frequently made by such as employ themselves in surveying the conduct of mankind, than that marriage though the dictate of nature, and the institution of Providence, is yet very often the cause of misery, and that those who enter into that state can seldom forbear to express their repentance, and their envy of those whom either chance or caution hath withheld from it.

This general unhappiness has given occasion to many sage maxims among the serious, and smart remarks among the gay; the moralist and the writer of epigrams have equally shown their abilities upon it; some have lamented, and some have ridiculed it; but as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the women, and the grave and the merry have equally thought themselves at liberty to conclude either with declamatory complaints, or satirical censures, of female folly or fickleness, ambition or cruelty, extravagance or lust.

Led by such a number of examples, and incited by my share in the common interest, I sometimes venture to consider this universal grievance, hav

ing endeavoured to divest my heart of all partiality, and place myself as a kind of neutral being between the sexes, whose clamours being equally vented on both sides with all the vehemence of distress, all the apparent confidence of justice, and all the indignation of injured virtue, seem entitled to equal regard. The men have, indeed, by their superiority of writing, been able to collect the evidence of many ages, and raise prejudices in their favour by the venerable testimonies of philosophers, historians, and poets, but the plea of the ladies appeal to passions of more forcible operation than the reverence of antiquity. If they have not so great names on their side they have stronger arguments; it is to little purpose, that Socrates, or Euripides, are produced against the sighs of softness and the tears of beauty. The most frigid and inexorable judge would at least stand suspended between equal powers, as Lucan was perplexed in the determination of the cause, where the deities were on one side, and Cato on the other.

But I, who have long studied the severest and most abstracted philosophy, have now, in the cool maturity of life, arrived at such command over my passions, that I can hear the vociferations from either sex, without catching any of the fire from those that utter them. For I have found, by long experience, that a man will sometimes rage at his wife, when in reality his mistress has offended him; and a lady complain of the cruelty of her husband, when she has no other enemy than bad cards. I do not suffer myself to be any longer imposed upon by oaths on one side, or fits on the other, nor when the husband hastens to the tavern, and the lady retires to her closet, am I always confident that they are driven by their miseries; since I have sometimes reason to believe, that they purpose not so much to soothe their sorrows, as to animate their fury. But how little credit soever may be given to particular accusations, the general accumulation of the charge shows, with too much evidence, that married persons are not very often advanced in felicity; and, therefore, it may be proper to examine at what avenues so many evils have made their way into the world. With this purpose, I have reviewed the lives of my friends, who have been least successful in connubial contracts, and attentively considered by what motives they were incited to marry, and by what principles they regulated their choice.

One of the first of my acquaintances that resolved to quit the unsettled thoughtless condition of a bachelor, was Prudentius, a man of slow parts, but not without knowledge or judgment in things which he had leisure to consider gradually before he determined them. Whenever we met at a tavern, it was his province to settle the scheme of our entertainment, contract with the cook, and inform us when we had called for wine to the sum originally proposed. This grave considerer found, by deep meditation, that a man was no loser by marrying early, even though he contented himself with a less fortune; for estimating the exact worth of annuities, he found that considering the constant diminution of the value of life, with the probable fall of the interest of money, it was not worse to have ten thousand pounds at the age of two and twenty years, than a much larger fortune at thirty; for many opportunities, says he, occur of improving money, which if a man misses he may not afterwards recover.

Full of these reflections, he threw his eyes about him, not in search of beauty or elegance, dignity or understanding, but of a woman with ten thousand pounds. Such a woman, in a wealthy part of the kingdom, it was not very difficult to find; and by artful management with her father, whose ambition was to make his daughter a gentlewoman, my friend got her, as he boasted to us in confidence two days after his marriage, for a settlement of seventy-three pounds a year less than her fortune might have claimed, and less than he would himself have given, if the fools had been but wise enough to delay the bargain.

Thus, at once delighted with the superiority of his parts and the augmentation of his fortune, he carried Furia to his own house, in which he never afterwards enjoyed one hour of happiness. For Furia was a wretch of mean intellects, violent passions, a strong voice, and low education, without any sense of happiness but that which consisted in eating and counting money.—Furia was a scold. They agreed in the desire of wealth, but with this difference, that Prudentius was for growing rich by gain, Furia by parsimony. Prudentius would venture his money with chances very much in his favour; but Furia very wisely observing, that what they had, was while they had it, *their own*, thought all traffic too great a hazard, and was for putting it out at low interest, upon good security. Prudentius ventured however, to insure a ship at a very unreasonable price, but happening to lose his money, was so tormented with the clamours of his wife, that he never durst try a second experiment. He has now grovelled seven and forty years under Furia's direction, who never once mentioned him, since his bad luck, by any other name than that of *the insurer*.

The next that married from our society was Florentius. He happened to see Zephyretta in a chariot at a horse-race, danced with her at night, was confirmed in his first ardour, waited on her next morning, and declared himself her lover. Florentius had not knowledge enough of the world, to distinguish between the flutter of coquetry and the sprightliness of wit, or between the smile of allurement and that of cheerfulness. He was soon waked from his rapture, by conviction that his pleasure was but the pleasure of a day. Zephyretta had in four and twenty hours spent her stock of repartee, gone round the circle of her airs, and had nothing remaining for him but childish insipidity, or for herself, but the practice of the same artifices upon new men.

Melissus was a man of parts, capable of enjoying and improving life. He had passed through the various scenes of gayety with that indifference and possession of himself, natural to men who have something higher and nobler in their prospect. Retiring to spend the summer in a village little frequented, he happened to lodge in the same house with Ianthe, and was unavoidably drawn to some acquaintance, which her wit and politeness soon invited him to improve. Having no opportunity of any other company, they were always together; and as they owed their pleasures to each other, they began to forget that any pleasure was enjoyed before their meeting. Melissus, from being delighted with

her company, quickly began to be uncasy in her absence, and being sufficiently convinced of the force of her understanding, and finding, as he imagined, such a conformity of temper as declared them formed for each other, addressed her as a lover, after no very long courtship obtained her for his wife, and brought her next winter to town in triumph.

Now began their infelicity. Melissus had only seen her in one scene, where there was no variety of objects, to produce the proper excitements to contrary desires. They had both loved solitude and reflection, where there was nothing but solitude and reflection to be loved; but when they came into public life, Ianthe discovered those passions which accident rather than hypocrisy had hitherto concealed. She was indeed, not without the power of thinking, but was wholly without the exertion of that power when either gayety or splendour played on her imagination. She was expensive in her diversions, vehement in her passions, insatiate of pleasure, however dangerous to her reputation, and eager of applause, by whomsoever it might be given. This was the wife which Melissus the philosopher found in his retirement, and from whom he expected an associate in his studies, and an assistant to his virtues.

Prosapius, upon the death of his younger brother, that the family might not be extinct, married his housekeeper, and has ever since been complaining to his friends that mean notions are instilled into his children, that he is ashamed to sit at his own table, and that his house is uneasy to him for want of suitable companions.

Avaro, master of a very large estate, took a woman of bad reputation, recommended to him by a rich uncle, who made that marriage the condition on which he should be his heir. Avaro now wonders to perceive his own fortune, his wife's and his uncle's, insufficient to give him that happiness which is to be found only with a woman of virtue.

I intend to treat in more papers on this important article of life, and shall, therefore, make no reflection upon these histories, except that all whom I have mentioned failed to obtain happiness, for want of considering that marriage is the strictest tie of perpetual friendship; that there can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity; and that he must expect to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches, or politeness, that regard which only virtue and piety can claim.

No. 19.] TUESDAY, MAY 22, 1750.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non decernis Taure, *quid esse velis,*
Peleos *et* Priami *transit, vel* Nestoris *ætas,*
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere.—
Eja, age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, potes esse nihil.— MART.

To rhetoric now, and now to law inclined,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind;
Old *Priam's* age or *Nestor's* may be out,
And thou, O *Taurus!* still go on in doubt.
Come then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou may'st doubt on: thou now canst nothing be.
F. LEWIS.

IT is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct, or miscarriage, of those men, who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature, and privileged from the common infelicities of life. Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons, whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for many years been making observations on the life of Polyphilus, a man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first appearance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discernment, and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but whose progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, have been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge, and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable, at the school, for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress as well through the thorny mazes of science, as the flowery path of politer literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually choose their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to inquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that he would leave all his contemporaries behind him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should enlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes, and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break out upon it; nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those, who, having shone awhile, and drawn the eyes of the public upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicians, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to maintain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chymistry, and to leave no part unconquered, either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried experiments; but unhappily, as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea, he met, in crossing Westminster to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physic for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours, and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place book, and confined himself for some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attorneys, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study, which was so narrow in its comprehension, that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only for money. The barrenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other company at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he, by chance, mingled at a tavern with some intelligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gayety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he therefore, cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make him so long insensible of that ambition, which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling, which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seemed to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of adventures, and accounts of foreign countries; and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life in which all his views could so completely concentre as in that of a soldier. In the art of war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in the principles of tactics or fortification; he therefore studied all the military writers, both ancient and modern, and, in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost from the beginning of the world. He often showed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal error at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He intrenched armies upon paper so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time, obtained a commission; but before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of military vivacity, a war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action, that terror which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw that, instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him within this last half year deciphering the Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself! He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before him: but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way, and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of consulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be discovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early discerned. At least, if to

miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned Bishop Sanderson, that when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading, he was often forced to produce, not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be useful to few other purposes than to warn others against the same folly; and to show, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who chooses earliest chooses best.

No. 20.] SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1750.

Ad populum phaleras. Ego te intus et in cute novi.
PERSIUS.

Such pageantry be to the people shown;
There boast thy horse's trappings and thy own;
I know thee to thy bottom, from within
Thy shallow centre, to thy utmost skin.
DRYDEN.

AMONG the numerous stratagems, by which pride endeavours to recommend folly to regard, there is scarcely one that meets with less success than affectation, or a perpetual disguise of the real character, by fictitious appearances; whether it be, that every man hates falsehood, from the natural congruity of truths to his faculties of reason, or that every man is jealous of the honour of his understanding, and thinks his discernment consequently called in question, whenever any thing is exhibited under a borrowed form.

This aversion to all kinds of disguise, whatever be its cause, is universally diffused, and incessantly in action; nor is it necessary, that to exasperate detestation or excite contempt, any interest should be invaded, or any competition attempted; it is sufficient, that there is an intention to deceive, an intention which every heart swells to oppose, and every tongue is busy to detect.

This reflection was awakened in my mind by a very common practice among my correspondents, of writing under characters which they cannot support, which are of no use to the explanation or enforcement of that which they describe or recommend; and which, therefore, since they assume them only for the sake of displaying their abilities, I will advise them for the future to forbear, as laborious without advantage.

It is almost a general ambition of those who favour me with their advice for the regulation of my conduct, or their contribution for the assistance of my understanding, to affect the style and the names of ladies. And I cannot always withhold some expression of anger, like Sir Hugh in the comedy, when I happen to find that a woman has a beard. I must therefore warn the gentle Phyllis, that she send me no more letters from the Horse Guards; and require of Belinda, that she be content to resign her pretensions to female elegance, till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politics of Batson's coffeehouse. I must indulge myself in the liberty of observation, that there were some allusions in Chloris's production, sufficient to show that Bracton and Plowden are her favourite authors; and that Euphelia has not been long enough at home, to wear out all the traces of the phraseology, which she learned in the expedition to Carthagena.

Among all my female friends, there was none who gave me more trouble to decypher her true character than Penthesilea, whose letter lay upon my desk three days before I could fix upon the real writer. There was a confusion of images, and medley of barbarity, which held me long in suspense; till by perseverance I disentangled the perplexity, and found that Penthesilea is the son of a wealthy stock-jobber, who spends his morning under his father's eye in Change-alley, dines at a tavern in Covent-garden, passes his evening in the play-house, and part of the night at a gaming-table, and having learned the dialects of these various regions, has mingled them all in a studied composition.

When Lee was once told by a critic, that it was very easy to write like a madman; he answered, that it was difficult to write like a madman, but easy enough to write like a fool; and I hope to be excused by my kind contributors, if in imitation of this great author, I presume to remind them, that it is much easier not to write like a man, than to write like a woman.

I have, indeed, some ingenious well-wishers, who, without departing from their sex, have found very wonderful appellations. A very smart letter has been sent me from a puny ensign, signed Ajax Telamonius; another, in recommendation of a new treatise upon cards, from a gamester, who calls himself Sesostris: and another upon the improvements of the fishery, from Dioclesian; but as these seem only to have picked up their appellations by chance, without endeavouring at any particular imposture, their improprieties are rather instances of blunder than of affectation, and are, therefore, not equally fitted to inflame the hostile passions: for it is not folly but pride, not error, but deceit, which the world means to persecute, when it raises the full cry of nature to hunt down affectation.

The hatred which dissimulation always draws upon itself is so great, that if I did not know how much cunning differs from wisdom, I should wonder that any men have so little knowledge of their own interest, as to aspire to wear a mask for life; to try to impose upon the world a character, to which they feel themselves void of any just claim; and to hazard their quiet, their fame, and even their profit, by exposing themselves to the danger, of that reproach, malevolence, and neglect, which such a discovery as they have always to fear will certainly bring upon them.

It might be imagined that the pleasure of reputation should consist in the satisfaction of having our opinion of our own merit confirmed by the suffrage of the public; and that, to be extolled for a quality, which a man knows himself to want, should give him no other happiness than to be mistaken for the owner of an estate, over which he chances to be travelling. But he who subsists upon affectation, knows nothing of this delicacy; like a desperate adventurer in commerce, he takes up reputation upon trust, mortgages possessions which he never had, and enjoys, to the fatal hour of bankruptcy, though with a thousand terrors and anxieties, the unnecessary splendour of borrowed riches.

Affectation is always to be distinguished from hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might with innocence and safety, be known to want. Thus the man who, to carry on any fraud, or to conceal any crime, pretends to rigours of devotion, and exactness of life, is guilty of hypocrisy; and his guilt is greater, as the end, for which he puts on the false appearance, is more pernicious. But he that, with an awkward address, and unpleasing countenance, boasts of the conquests made by him among the ladies, and counts over the thousands which he might have possessed if he would have submitted to the yoke of matrimony, is chargeable only with affectation. Hypocrisy is the necessary burthen of villany, affectation part of the chosen trappings of folly; the one completes a villain, the other only finishes a fop. Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.

With the hypocrite it is not at present my intention to expostulate, though even he might be taught the excellency of virtue, by the necessity of seeming to be virtuous; but the man of affectation may, perhaps, be reclaimed, by finding how little he is likely to gain by perpetual constraint and incessant vigilance, and how much more securely he might make his way to esteem, by cultivating real, than displaying counterfeit qualities.

Every thing future is to be estimated, by a wise man, in proportion to the probability of attaining it, and its value, when attained; and neither of these considerations will much contribute to the encouragement of affectation. For, if the pinnacles of fame be, at best, slippery, how unsteady must his footing be who stands upon pinnacles without foundation! If praise be made by the inconstancy and maliciousness of those who must confer it, a blessing which no man can promise himself from the most conspicuous merit and vigorous industry, how faint must be the hope of gaining it, when the uncertainty is multiplied by the weakness of the pretensions! He that pursues fame with just claims, trusts his happiness to the winds: but he that endeavours after it by false merit, has to fear, not only the violence of the storm, but the leaks of his vessel. Though he should happen to keep above water for a time, by the help of a soft breeze, and a calm sea, at the first gust he must inevitably founder, with this melancholy reflection, that, if he would have been content with his natural station, he might have escaped his calamity. Affectation may possibly succeed for a time, and a man may, by great attention, persuade others, that he really has the qualities of which he presumes to boast; but the hour will come when he should exert them, and then, whatever he enjoyed in praise, he must suffer in reproach.

Applause and admiration are by no means to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore any indirect arts to obtain them have very little claim to pardon or compassion. There is scarcely any man without some valuable or improveable qualities, by which he might always secure himself from contempt. And perhaps exemption from ignominy is the most eligible reputation, as freedom from pain is, among some philosophers, the definition of happiness.

If we therefore compare the value of the praise obtained by fictitious excellence, even while the cheat is yet undiscovered, with that kindness which every man may suit by his virtue, and that esteem to which most men may rise by common understanding steadily and honestly applied, we shall find that when from the adscititious happiness all the deductions are made by fear and casualty, there will remain nothing equiponderant to the security of truth. The state of the possessor of humble virtues, to the affecter of great excellences, is that of a small cottage of stone, to the palace raised with ice by the Empress of Russia; it was for a time splendid and luminous, but the first sunshine melted it to nothing.

No. 21.] Tuesday, May 29, 1750.

Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes
Nutrit; et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est. OVID

Our bane and physic the same earth bestows,
And near the noisome nettle blooms the rose.

Every man is prompted by the love of himself to imagine, that he possesses some qualities superior, either in kind or in degree, to those which he sees allotted to the rest of the world; and, whatever apparent disadvantages he may suffer in the comparison with others, he has some invisible distinctions, some latent reserve of excellence, which he throws into the balance, and by which he generally fancies that it is turned in his favour.

The studious and speculative part of mankind always seem to consider their fraternity as placed in a state of opposition to those who are engaged in the tumult of public business; and have pleased themselves from age to age with celebrating the felicity of their own condition, and without recounting the perplexity of politics, the dangers of greatness, the anxieties of ambition, and the miseries of riches.

Among the numerous topics of declamation, that their industry has discovered on this subject, there is none which they press with greater efforts, or on which they have more copiously laid out their reason and their imagination, than the instability of high stations, and the uncertainty with which the profits and honours are possessed, that must be acquired with so much hazard, vigilance and labour.

This they appear to consider as an irrefragable argument against the choice of the statesman and the warrior; and swell with confidence of victory, thus furnished by the Muses with the arms which never can be blunted, and which no

art or strength of their adversaries can elude or resist.

It was well known by experience to the nations which employed elephants in war, that though by the terror of their bulk, and the violence of their impressions, they often threw the enemy into disorder, yet there was always danger in the use of them, very nearly equivalent to the advantage; for if their first charge could be supported, they were easily driven back upon their confederates; they then broke through the troops behind them, and made no less havoc in the precipitation of their retreat, than in the fury of their onset.

I know not whether those who have so vehemently urged the inconveniences and danger of an active life, have not made use of arguments that may be retorted with equal force upon themselves; and whether the happiness of a candidate for literary fame be not subject to the same uncertainty with that of him who governs provinces, commands armies, presides in the senate, or dictates in the cabinet.

That eminence of learning is not to be gained without labour, at least equal to that which any other kind of greatness can require, will be allowed by those who wish to elevate the character of a scholar; since they cannot but know, that every human acquisition is valuable in proportion to the difficulty employed in its attainment. And that those who have gained the esteem and veneration of the world, by their knowledge or their genius, are by no means exempt from the solicitude which any other kind of dignity produces, may be conjectured from the innumerable artifices which they make use of to degrade a superior, to repress a rival, or obstruct a follower; artifices so gross and mean, as to prove evidently how much a man may excel in learning without being either more wise or more virtuous than those whose ignorance he pities or despises.

Nothing therefore remains, by which the student can gratify his desire of appearing to have built his happiness on a more firm basis than his antagonist, except the certainty with which his honours are enjoyed. The garlands gained by the heroes of literature must be gathered from summits equally difficult to climb with those that bear the civic or triumphal wreaths, they must be worn with equal envy, and guarded with equal care from those hands that are always employed in efforts to tear them away; the only remaining hope is, that their verdure is more lasting, and that they are less likely to fade by time, or less obnoxious to the blasts of accident.

Even this hope will receive very little encouragement from the examination of the history of learning, or observation of the fate of scholars in the present age. If we look back into past times, we find innumerable names of authors once in high reputation, read perhaps by the beautiful, quoted by the witty, and commented on by the grave; but of whom we now know only that they once existed. If we consider the distribution of literary fame in our own time, we shall find it a possession of very uncertain tenure; sometimes bestowed by a sudden caprice of the public, and again transferred to a new favourite, for no other reason than that he is new; sometimes refused to long labour and eminent desert, and sometimes granted to very slight pretensions; lost sometimes by security and negligence, and sometimes by too diligent endeavours to retain it.

A successful author is equally in danger of the diminution of his fame, whether he continues or ceases to write. The regard of the public is not to be kept but by tribute, and the remembrance of past service will quickly languish, unless successive performances frequently revive it. Yet in every new attempt there is new hazard, and there are few who do not, at some unlucky time, injure their own characters by attempting to enlarge them.

There are many possible causes of that inequality which we may so frequently observe in the performances of the same man, from the influence of which no ability or industry is sufficiently secured, and which have so often sullied the splendour of genius, that the wit, as well as the conqueror, may be properly cautioned not to indulge his pride with too early triumphs, but to defer to the end of life his estimate of happiness

——————*Ultima semper*
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded bless'd before he die. ADDISON.

Among the motives that urge an author to undertakings by which his reputation is impaired, one of the most frequent must be mentioned with tenderness, because it is not to be counted among his follies, but his miseries. It very often happens that the works of learning or of wit are performed at the direction of those by whom they are to be rewarded; the writer has not always the choice of his subject, but is compelled to accept any task which is thrown before him, without much consideration of his own convenience, and without time to prepare himself by previous studies.

Miscarriages of this kind are likewise frequently the consequence of that acquaintance with the great, which is generally considered as one of the chief privileges of literature and genius. A man who has once learned to think himself exalted by familiarity with those whom nothing but their birth, or their fortunes, or such stations as are seldom gained by moral excellence, set above him, will not be long without submitting his understanding to their conduct; he will suffer them to prescribe the course of his studies, and employ him for their own purposes either of diversion or interest. His desire of pleasing those whose favour he has weakly made necessary to himself, will not suffer him always to consider how little he is qualified for the work imposed. Either his vanity will tempt him to conceal his deficiencies, or that cowardice, which always encroaches fast upon such as spend their lives in the company of persons higher than themselves, will not leave him resolution to assert the liberty of choice.

But, though we suppose that a man by his fortune can avoid the necessity of dependence, and by his spirit can repel the usurpations of patronage, yet he may easily, by writing long, happen to write ill. There is a general succession of events in which contraries are produced by periodical vicissitudes; labour and care are rewarded with success, success produces confidence, confidence relaxes industry, and negligence ruins that reputation which accuracy had raised.

He that happens not to be lulled by praise into supineness, may be animated by it to undertakings above his strength, or incited to fancy himself alike qualified for every kind of composition, and able to comply with the public taste through all its variations. By some opinion like this, many men have been engaged, at an advanced age in attempts which they had not time to complete, and after a few weak efforts, sunk into the grave with vexation to see the rising generation gain ground upon them. From these failures the highest genius is not exempt; that judgment which appears so penetrating, when it is employed upon the works of others, very often fails where interest or passion can exert their power. We are blinded in examining our own labours by innumerable prejudices. Our juvenile compositions please us, because they bring to our minds the remembrance of youth; our later performances we are ready to esteem, because we are unwilling to think that we have made no improvement; what flows easily from the pen charms us, because we read with pleasure that which flatters our opinion of our own powers; what was composed with great struggles of the mind we do not easily reject, because we cannot bear that so much labour should be fruitless. But the reader has none of these prepossessions, and wonders that the author is so unlike himself, without considering that the same soil will, with different culture, afford different products.

No. 22.] SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 1750.

——Ego nec studium sine divite vena
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium; alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res et conjurat amice. HOR.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.
ELPHINSTON.

WIT and Learning were the children of Apollo, by different mothers: Wit was the offspring of Euphrosyne, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity: Learning was born of Sophia, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the material animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of exerting it. No sooner were they of age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than Wit began to entertain Venus at her toilet, by aping the solemnity of Learning, and Learning to divert Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of Wit.

Thus they grew up, with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronize and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were both, with the usual solemnities, received into the class of superior deities, and allowed to take nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from that hour Concord lost her authority at the table of Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their new dignity, and incited by the alternate applauses of the associate powers, harassed each other by incessant contests, with such a regular vicissitude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that at the beginning of every debate, the advantage was on the side of Wit; and that, at the first sallies, the whole assembly sparkled, according to Homer's expression, with unextinguishable merriment. But Learning would reserve her strength till the burst of applause was over, and the languor with which the violence of joy is always succeeded, began to promise more calm and patient attention. She then attempted her defence, and by comparing one part of her antagonist's objections with another, commonly made him confute himself; or, by showing how small a part of the question he had taken into his view, proved that his opinion could have no weight. The audience began gradually to lay aside their prepossessions, and rose, at last, with greater veneration for Learning, but with greater kindness for Wit.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired to recommend themselves to distinction, entirely opposite. Wit was daring and adventurous; Learning cautious and deliberate. Wit thought nothing reproachful but dulness; Learning was afraid of no imputation, but that of error. Wit answered before he understood, lest his quickness of apprehension should be questioned; Learning paused, where there was no difficulty, lest any insidious sophism should lie undiscovered. Wit perplexed every debate by rapidity and confusion; Learning tired the hearers with endless distinctions, and prolonged the dispute without advantage, by proving that which never was denied. Wit, in hopes of shining, would venture to produce what he had not considered, and often succeeded beyond his own expectation, by following the train of a lucky thought; Learning would reject every new notion, for fear of being entangled in consequences which she could not foresee, and was often hindered, by her caution, from pressing her advantages, and subduing her opponent.

Both had prejudices, which in some degree hindered their progress towards perfection, and left them open to attacks. Novelty was the darling of Wit, and antiquity of Learning. To Wit, all that was new was specious; to Learning, whatever was ancient was venerable. Wit, however, seldom failed to divert those whom he could not convince, and to convince was not often his ambition; Learning always supported her opinion with so many collateral truths, that, when the cause was decided against her, her arguments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. Wit would sometimes labour a syllogism, and Learning distort her features with a jest; but

they always suffered by the experiment, and betrayed themselves to confutation or contempt. The seriousness of Wit was without dignity, and the merriment of Learning without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. Wit was taken into the protection of the laughter-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of Smiles and Jests, and was often permitted to dance among the Graces. Learning still continued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace, without a train of the severer virtues, Chastity, Temperance, Fortitude, and Labour. Wit, cohabiting with Malice, had a son named Satyr, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at Learning, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse inquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva therefore deputed Criticism to her aid, who generally broke the point of Satyr's arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither therefore they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals, nor was either long without zealous votaries. Wit, by his gayety, captivated the young; and Learning, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects; theatres were built for the reception of Wit; and colleges endowed for the residence of Learning. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion, that it was necessary, from the first entrance into life, to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom Wit and Learning were equally disregarded; these were the devotees of Plutus, the god of riches: among these it seldom happened that the gayety of Wit could raise a smile, or the eloquence of Learning procure attention. In revenge of this contempt they agreed to incite their followers against them; but the forces that were sent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received, flattered the rich in public, while they scorned them in their hearts; and when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of superiority on those who still remained in the service of Wit and Learning.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for readmission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. Wit readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far, was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the ethereal spaces. Learning, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour, could only take short flights; so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned from their mutual distress the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands and renewed their flight; Learning was borne up by the vigour of Wit, and Wit guided by the perspicacity of Learning. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. Wit persuaded Learning to converse with the Graces, and Learning engaged Wit in the service of the Virtues. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of Arts and Sciences.

No. 23.] TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 1750.

Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur,
Poscentes vario multum diversa palato. HOR.

Three guests I have, dissenting at my feast,
Requiring each to gratify his taste
With different food. FRANCIS.

THAT every man should regulate his actions by his own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence; justified not only by the suffrage of reason, which declares that none of the gifts of Heaven are to lie useless, but by the voice likewise of experience, which will soon inform us that, if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcileable judgments, be held in perpetual suspense between contrary impulses, and consult for ever without determination.

I know not whether, for the same reason, it is not necessary for an author to place some confidence in his own skill, and to satisfy himself in the knowledge that he has not deviated from the established laws of composition, without submitting his works to frequent examinations before he gives them to the public, or endeavouring to secure success by a solicitous conformity to advice and criticism.

It is, indeed, quickly discoverable, that consultation and compliance can conduce little to the perfection of any literary performance; for whoever is so doubtful of his own abilities as to encourage the remarks of others, will find himself every day embarrassed with new difficulties, and will harass his mind, in vain, with the hopeless labour of uniting heterogeneous ideas, digesting independent hints, and collecting into one point the several rays of borrowed light, emitted often with contrary directions.

Of all authors, those who retail their labours in periodical sheets would be most unhappy, if they were much to regard the censures or the admonitions of their readers; for, as their works are not sent into the world at once, but by small parts in gradual succession, it is always imagined, by those who think themselves qualified to give instructions, that they may yet redeem their former failings by hearkening to better judges, and supply the deficiencies of their plan, by the help of the criticisms which are so liberally afforded.

I have had occasion to observe, sometimes with vexation, and sometimes with merriment, the different temper with which the same man reads a printed and manuscript performance. When a book is once in the hands of the public, it is

considered as permanent and unalterable, and the reader, if he be free from personal prejudices, takes it up with no other intention than of pleasing or instructing himself: he accommodates his mind to the author's design; and having no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered him, never interrupts his own tranquillity by studied cavils, or destroys his satisfaction in that which is already well, by an anxious inquiry how it might be better; but is often contented without pleasure, and pleased without perfection.

But if the same man be called to consider the merit of a production yet unpublished, he brings an imagination heated with objections to passages which he has yet never heard; he invokes all the powers of criticism, and stores his memory with Taste and Grace, Purity and Delicacy, Manners and Unities, sounds which, having been once uttered by those that understood them, have been since re-echoed without meaning, and kept up to the disturbance of the world, by a constant repercussion from one coxcomb to another. He considers himself as obliged to show, by some proof of his abilities, that he is not consulted to no purpose, and therefore watches every opening for objection, and looks round for every opportunity to propose some specious alteration. Such opportunities a very small degree of sagacity will enable him to find; for, in every work of imagination, the disposition of parts, the insertion of incidents, and use of decorations, may be varied a thousand ways with equal propriety; and as in things nearly equal, that will always seem best to every man which he himself produces; the critic, whose business is only to propose, without the care of execution, can never want the satisfaction of believing that he has suggested very important improvements, nor the power of enforcing his advice by arguments, which, as they appear convincing to himself, either his kindness or his vanity will press obstinately and importunately without suspicion that he may possibly judge too hastily in favour of his own advice, or inquiry whether the advantage of the new scheme be proportionate to the labour.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that an orator ought not so much to select the strongest arguments which his cause admits, as to employ all which his imagination can afford: for, in pleading, those reasons are of most value, which will most affect the judges; and the judges, says he, will be always most touched with that which they had before conceived. Every man who is called to give his opinion of a performance, decides upon the same principle: he first suffers himself to form expectations, and then is angry at his disappointment. He lets his imagination rove at large, and wonders that another, equally unconfined in the boundless ocean of possibility, takes a different course.

But, though the rule of Pliny be judiciously laid down, it is not applicable to the writer's cause, because there always lies an appeal from domestic criticism to a higher judicature, and the public, which is never corrupted, nor often deceived, is to pass the last sentence upon literary claims.

Of the great force of preconceived opinions I had many proofs when I first entered upon this weekly labour. My readers having, from the performances of my predecessors, established an idea of unconnected essays, to which they believed all future authors under a necessity of conforming, were impatient of the least deviation from their system, and numerous remonstrances were accordingly made by each, as he found his favourite subject omitted or delayed. Some were angry that the Rambler did not, like the Spectator, introduce himself to the acquaintance of the public, by an account of his own birth and studies, an enumeration of his adventures, and a description of his physiognomy. Others soon began to remark that he was a solemn, serious, dictatorial writer, without sprightliness or gayety, and called out with vehemence for mirth and humour. Another admonished him to have a special eye upon the various clubs of this great city, and informed him that much of the Spectator's vivacity was laid out upon such assemblies. He has been censured for not imitating the politeness of his predecessors, having hitherto neglected to take the ladies under his protection, and give them rules for the just opposition of colours, and the proper dimensions of ruffles and pinners. He has been required by one to fix a particular censure upon those matrons who play at cards with spectacles: and another is very much offended whenever he meets with a speculation in which naked precepts are comprised without the illustration of examples and characters.

I make not the least question that all these monitors intend the promotion of my design, and the instruction of my readers; but they do not know, or do not reflect, that an author has a rule of choice peculiar to himself; and selects those subjects which he is best qualified to treat, by the course of his studies, or the accidents of his life; that some topics of amusement have been already treated with too much success to invite a competition; and that he who endeavours to gain many readers must try various arts of invitation, essay every avenue of pleasure, and make frequent changes in his methods of approach.

I cannot but consider myself, amidst this tumult of criticism, as a ship in a poetical tempest, impelled at the same time by opposite winds, and dashed by the waves from every quarter, but held upright by the contrariety of the assailants, and secured in some measure by multiplicity of distress. Had the opinion of my censurers been unanimous, it might perhaps have overset my resolution; but since I find them at variance with each other, I can, without scruple, neglect them, and endeavour to gain the favour of the public by following the direction of my own reason, and indulging the sallies of my own imagination.

No. 24.] SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1750.

Nemo in sese tentat descendere.—PERSIUS.

None, none descends into himself.—DRYDEN.

AMONG the precepts, or aphorisms admitted by general consent, and inculcated by frequent repetition, there is none more famous among the masters of ancient wisdom, than that compendious lesson, Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, *Be acquainted with thyself;* ascribed by some to an oracle, and by others to Chilo of Lacedemon.

This is, indeed, a dictate, which, in the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise

all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?

It is however very improbable that the first author, whoever he was, intended it to be understood in this unlimited and complicated sense; for of the inquiries, which in so large an acceptation it would seem to recommend, some are too extensive for the powers of man, and some require light from above, which was not yet indulged to the heathen world.

We might have had more satisfaction concerning the original import of this celebrated sentence, if history had informed us, whether it was uttered as a general instruction to mankind, or as a particular caution to some private inquirer; whether it was applied to some single occasion, or laid down as the universal rule of life.

There will occur, upon the slightest consideration, many possible circumstances, in which this monition might very properly be enforced; for every error in human conduct must arise from ignorance in ourselves, either perpetual or temporary; and happen either because we do not know what is best and fittest, or because our knowledge is at the time of action not present to the mind.

When a man employs himself upon remote and unnecessary subjects, and wastes his life upon questions which cannot be resolved, and of which the solution would conduce very little to the advancement of happiness: when he lavishes his hours in calculating the weight of the terraqueous globe, or in adjusting successive systems of worlds beyond the reach of the telescope; he may be very properly recalled from his excursions by this precept, and reminded, that there is a nearer being with which it is his duty to be more acquainted; and from which his attention has hitherto been withheld by studies, to which he has no other motive than vanity or curiosity.

The great praise of Socrates is, that he drew the wits of Greece, by his instruction and example from the vain pursuit of natural philosophy to moral inquiries, and turned their thoughts from stars and tides, and matter and motion, upon the various modes of virtue and relations of life. All his lectures were but commentaries upon this saying; if we suppose the knowledge of ourselves recommended by Chilo, in opposition to other inquiries less suitable to the state of man.

The great fault of men of learning is still, that they offend against this rule, and appear willing to study any thing rather than themselves; for which reason they are often despised by those with whom they imagine themselves above comparison; despised, as useless to common purposes, as unable to conduct the most trivial affairs, and unqualified to perform those offices by which the concatenation of society is preserved, and mutual tenderness excited and maintained.

Gelidus is a man of great penetration and deep researches. Having a mind naturally formed for the abstruser sciences, he can comprehend intricate combinations without confusion, and being of a temper naturally cool and equal, he is seldom interrupted by his passions in the pursuit of the longest chain of unexpected consequences. He has, therefore, a long time indulged hopes, that the solution of some problems, by which the professors of science have been hitherto baffled, is reserved for his genius and industry. He spends his time in the highest room of his house, into which none of his family are suffered to enter; and when he comes down to his dinner, or his rest, he walks about like a stranger that is there only for a day, without any tokens of regard or tenderness. He has totally divested himself of all human sensations; he has neither eye for beauty, nor ear for complaint; he neither rejoices at the good fortune of his nearest friend, nor mourns for any public or private calamity. Having once received a letter, and given it his servant to read, he was informed, that it was written by his brother, who, being shipwrecked, had swam naked to land, and was destitute of necessaries in a foreign country. Naked and destitute! says Gelidus—reach down the last volume of meteorological observations, extract an exact account of the wind, and note it carefully in the diary of the weather.

The family of Gelidus once broke into his study, to show him that a town at a small distance was on fire, and in a few moments a servant came up to tell him, that the flame had caught so many houses on both sides, that the inhabitants were confounded, and began to think of rather escaping with their lives than saving their dwellings. What you tell me, says Gelidus, is very probable, for fire naturally acts in a circle.

Thus lives this great philosopher, insensible to every spectacle of distress, and unmoved by the loudest call of social nature, for want of considering that men are designed for the succour and comfort of each other; that though there are hours which may be laudably spent upon knowledge not immediately useful, yet the first attention is due to practical virtue: and that he may be justly driven out from the commerce of mankind, who has so far abstracted himself from the species, as to partake neither of the joys nor griefs of others, but neglects the endearments of his wife, and the caresses of his children, to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter.

I shall reserve to some future paper the religious and important meaning of this epitome of wisdom, and only remark, that it may be applied to the gay and light, as well as to the grave and solemn parts of life; and that not only the philosopher may forfeit his pretences to real learning, but the wit and beauty may miscarry in their schemes, by the want of this universal requisite, the knowledge of themselves.

It is surely for no other reason, that we see such numbers resolutely struggling against nature, and contending for that which they never can attain, endeavouring to unite contradictions, and determined to excel in characters inconsistent with each other; that stock-jobbers affect dress, gayety, and elegance, and mathematicians labour to be wits; that the soldier teases his acquaintance with questions in theology, and the academic hopes to divert the ladies by a recital of his gallantries. That absurdity of pride could proceed only from ignorance of themselves, by which Garth attempted criticism, and Congreve waived his title to dramatic reputation, and desired to be considered only as a gentleman.

Euphues, with great parts, and extensive

knowledge, has a clouded aspect and ungracious form; yet it has been his ambition, from his first entrance into life, to distinguish himself by particularities in his dress, to outvie beaus in embroidery, to import new trimmings, and to be foremost in the fashion. Euphues has turned on his exterior appearance that attention which would always have produced esteem, had it been fixed upon his mind; and though his virtues and abilities have preserved him from the contempt which he has so diligently solicited, he has, at least, raised one impediment to his reputation; since all can judge of his dress, but few of his understanding; and many, who discern that he is a fop, are unwilling to believe that he can be wise.

There is one instance in which the ladies are particularly unwilling to observe the rule of Chilo. They are desirous to hide from themselves the advances of age, and endeavour too frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity. They hope to inflame the heart by glances which have lost their fire, or melt it by languor which is no longer delicate; they play over the airs which pleased at a time when they were expected only to please, and forget that airs ought in time to give place to virtues. They continue to trifle, because they could once trifle agreeably, till those who shared their early pleasures are withdrawn to more serious engagements; and are scarcely awakened from their dream of perpetual youth, but by the scorn of those whom they endeavour to rival.*

No. 25.] TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 1750.

Possunt quia posse videntur. VIRGIL.

For they can conquer who believe they can.
DRYDEN.

THERE are some vices and errors which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as entitled to some degree of respect, or have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shown to rashness and cowardice; two vices, of which, though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any public or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always considered as a topic of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made, by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and, perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and as I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions, or deep researches, I am inclined to believe, that this distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope, than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is it that he leaves them behind? We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of error, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties, and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But, since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which there is the greatest danger, and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among other opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degrees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency; of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, confounds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly show, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit nor abilities can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more obstinate and fatal; for a man once

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* Mrs. Piozzi says, that by *Gelidus*, in this paper, the author meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. This is not very probable, if we consider the character Davies gives of Mr. Coulson (Colson) in his Life of Garrick, which was certainly written under Dr. Jonnson's inspection, and, what relates to Colson, probably from his information.—C.

persuaded that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no hope of gaining the victory; and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature, a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and by consequence to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terror and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflection, from one to another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panic to their scholars and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is insufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears of which the *infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frighted from digressing into new tracts of learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of others: and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or in the language of chymistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated, by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by Heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know but by experience whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in a flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, knew their own force only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, and may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to show the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and to have proceeded with no less ease than they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement, sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposes him. Thus his terrors are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructers, the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain, the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted; the one confines his pupil to the shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrors are equally to be avoided. Every man, who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind at once the difficulty of excellence and the force of industry; and remember, that fame is not conferred but as the recompense of labour, and that labour vigorously continued has not often failed of its reward.

No. 26.] SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1750.

Ingentes dominos, et claræ nomina famæ,
Illustrique graves nobilitate domos
Devita, et longe cautus fuge; contrahe vela,
Et te littoribus cymba propinqua vehat.

SENECA

Each mighty lord, big with a pompous name,
And each high house of fortune and of fame,
With caution fly; contract thy ample sails,
And near the shore improve the gentle gales.

ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

IT is usual for men, engaged in the same pursuits, to be inquisitive after the conduct and fortune of each other; and, therefore, I suppose it will not be unpleasing to you, to read an account of the various changes which have happened in part of a life devoted to literature. My narrative will not exhibit any great variety of events, or extraordinary revolutions; but may, perhaps, be not less useful, because I shall relate nothing which is not likely to happen to a thousand others.

I was born heir to a very small fortune, and left by my father, whom I cannot remember, to the care of an uncle. He having no children, always treated me as his son, and finding in me those qualities which old men easily discover in sprightly children, when they happen to love them, declared that a genius like mine should never be lost for want of cultivation. He therefore placed me, for the usual time, at a great school, and then sent me to the university, with a larger allowance than my own patrimony would have afforded, that I might not keep mean company,

but learn to become my dignity when I should be made lord chancellor, which he often lamented, that the increase of his infirmities was very likely to preclude him from seeing.

This exuberance of money displayed itself in gayety of appearance, and wantonness of expense, and introduced me to the acquaintance of those whom the same superfluity of fortune betrayed to the same license and ostentation: young heirs, who pleased themselves with a remark very frequent in their mouths, that though they were sent by their fathers to the university, they were not under the necessity of living by their learning.

Among men of this class I easily obtained the reputation of a great genius, and was persuaded that with such liveliness of imagination, and delicacy of sentiment, I should never be able to submit to the drudgery of the law. I therefore gave myself wholly to the more airy and elegant parts of learning, and was often so much elated with my superiority to the youths with whom I conversed, that I began to listen, with great attention, to those that recommended to me a wider and more conspicuous theatre; and was particularly touched with an observation made by one of my friends—That it was not by lingering in the university that Prior became ambassador, or Addison secretary of state.

This desire was hourly increased by the solicitation of my companions, who removing one by one to London, as the caprice of their relations allowed them, or the legal dismission from the hands of their guardians put it in their power, never failed to send an account of the beauty and felicity of the new world, and to remonstrate how much was lost by every hour's continuance in a place of retirement and constraint.

My uncle in the mean time frequently harassed me with monitory letters, which I sometimes neglected to open for a week after I received them, and generally read in a tavern, with such comments as might show how much I was superior to instruction or advice. I could not but wonder, how a man confined to the country, and acquainted with the present system of things, should imagine himself qualified to instruct a rising genius, born to give laws to the age, refine its taste, and multiply its pleasures.

The postman, however, still continued to bring me new remonstrances; for my uncle was very little depressed by the ridicule and reproach which he never heard. But men of parts have quick resentments; it was impossible to bear his usurpations for ever; and I resolved, once for all, to make him an example to those who imagine themselves wise because they are old, and to teach young men, who are too tame under representation, in what manner gray-bearded insolence ought to be treated. I therefore one evening took my pen in hand, and after having animated myself with a catch, wrote a general answer to all his precepts with such vivacity of turn, such elegance of irony, and such asperity of sarcasm, that I convulsed a large company with universal laughter, disturbed the neighbourhood with vociferations of applause, and five days afterwards was answered, that I must be content to live upon my own estate.

This contraction of my income gave me no disturbance; for a genius like mine was out of the reach of want. I had friends that would be proud to open their purses at my call, and prospects of such advancement as would soon reconcile my uncle, whom, upon mature deliberation, I resolved to receive into favour without insisting on any acknowledgment of his offence, when the splendour of my condition should induce him to wish for my countenance. I therefore went up to London, before I had shown the alteration of my condition, by any abatement of my way of living, and was received by all my academical acquaintance with triumph and congratulation. I was immediately introduced among the wits and men of spirit, and in a short time had divested myself of all my scholar's gravity, and obtained the reputation of a pretty fellow.

You will easily believe that I had no great knowledge of the world; yet I had been hindered, by the general disinclination every man feels to confess poverty, from telling to any one the resolution of my uncle, and for some time subsisted upon the stock of money which I had brought with me, and contributed my share as before to all our entertainments. But my pocket was soon emptied, and I was obliged to ask my friends for a small sum. This was a favour, which we had often reciprocally received from one another; they supposed my wants only accidental, and therefore willingly supplied them. In a short time I found a necessity of asking again, and was again treated with the same civility; but the third time they began to wonder what that old rogue my uncle could mean by sending a gentleman to town without money; and when they gave me what I asked for, advised me to stipulate for more regular remittances.

This somewhat disturbed my dream of constant affluence; but I was three days after completely awakened; for entering the tavern where we met every evening, I found the waiters remitted their complaisance, and, instead of contending to light me up stairs, suffered me to wait for some minutes at the bar. When I came to my company, I found them unusually grave and formal, and one of them took the hint to turn the conversation upon the misconduct of young men, and enlarged upon the folly of frequenting the company of men of fortune, without being able to support the expense, an observation which the rest contributed either to enforce by repetition, or to illustrate by examples. Only one of them tried to divert the discourse, and endeavoured to direct my attention to remote questions and common topics.

A man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected. I went, however, next morning to breakfast with him, who appeared ignorant of the drift of the conversation, and by a series of inquiries drawing still nearer to the point, prevailed on him, not perhaps much against his will, to inform me, that Mr. Dash, whose father was a wealthy attorney near my native place, had, the morning before, received an account of my uncle's resentment, and communicated his intelligence with the utmost industry of grovelling insolence.

It was now no longer practicable to consort with my former friends, unless I would be content to be used as an inferior guest, who was to pay for his wine by mirth and flattery; a character which, if I could not escape it, I resolved to endure only among those who had never known

me in the pride of plenty. I changed my lodgings, and frequented the coffee-houses in a different region of the town; where I was very quickly distinguished by several young gentlemen of high birth and large estates, and began again to amuse my imagination with hopes of preferment, though not quite so confidently as when I had less experience.

The first great conquest which this new scene enabled me to gain over myself was, when I submitted to confess to a party, who invited me to an expensive diversion, that my revenues were not equal to such golden pleasures; they would not suffer me, however, to stay behind, and with great reluctance I yielded to be treated. I took that opportunity of recommending myself to some office or employment, which they unanimously promised to procure me by their joint interest.

I had now entered into a state of dependence, and had hopes, or fears, from almost every man I saw. If it be unhappy to have one patron, what is his misery who has many? I was obliged to comply with a thousand caprices, to concur in a thousand follies, and to countenance a thousand errors. I endured innumerable mortifications, if not from cruelty, at least from negligence, which will creep in upon the kindest and most delicate minds, when they converse without the mutual awe of equal condition. I found the spirit and vigour of liberty every moment sinking in me, and a servile fear of displeasing stealing by degrees upon all my behaviour, till no word, or look, or action, was my own. As the solicitude to please increased, the power of pleasing grew less, and I was always clouded with diffidence where it was most my interest and wish to shine.

My patrons, considering me as belonging to the community, and, therefore, not the charge of any particular person, made no scruple of neglecting any opportunity of promoting me, which every one thought more properly the business of another. An account of my expectations and disappointments, and the succeeding vicissitudes of my life, I shall give you in my following letter, which will be, I hope, of use to show how ill he forms his schemes, who expects happiness without freedom. I am, &c.

No. 27.] TUESDAY, JUNE 19, 1750.

——Pauperiem metuens potiore metallis
Libertate caret. HOR.

So he, who poverty with horror views,
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold,)
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight.
FRANCIS.

MR. RAMBLER,

As it is natural for every man to think himself of importance, your knowledge of the world will incline you to forgive me, if I imagine your curiosity so much excited by the former part of my narration, as to make you desire that I should proceed without any unnecessary arts of connexion. I shall, therefore, not keep you longer in such suspense, as perhaps my performance may not compensate.

In the gay company with which I was now united, I found those allurements and delights, which the friendship of young men always affords; there was that openness which naturally produced confidence, that affability which, in some measure, softened dependence, and that ardour of profession which incited hope. When our hearts were dilated with merriment, promises were poured out with unlimited profusion, and life and fortune were but a scanty sacrifice to friendship; but when the hour came, at which any effort was to be made, I had generally the vexation to find that my interest weighed nothing against the slightest amusement, and that every petty avocation was found a sufficient plea for continuing me in uncertainty and want. Their kindness was indeed sincere: when they promised, they had no intention to deceive; but the same juvenile warmth which kindled their benevolence, gave force in the same proportion to every other passion, and I was forgotten as soon as any new pleasures seized on their attention.

Vagario told me one evening, that all my perplexities should be soon at an end, and desired me, from that instant, to throw upon him all care of my fortune, for a post of considerable value was that day become vacant, and he knew his interest sufficient to procure it in the morning. He desired me to call on him early, that he might be dressed soon enough to wait on the minister before any other application should be made. I came as he appointed, with all the flame of gratitude, and was told by his servant, that having found at his lodgings, when he came home, an acquaintance who was going to travel, he had been persuaded to accompany him to Dover, and that they had taken post-horses two hours before day.

I was once very near to preferment, by the kindness of Charinus, who, at my request, went to beg a place, which he thought me likely to fill with great reputation, and in which I should have many opportunities of promoting his interest in return; and he pleased himself with imagining the mutual benefits that we should confer, and the advances that we should make by our united strength. Away therefore he went, equally warm with friendship and ambition, and left me to prepare acknowledgments against his return. At length he came back, and told me that he had met in his way a party going to breakfast in the country, that the ladies importuned him too much to be refused, and that having passed the morning with them, he was come back to dress himself for a ball, to which he was invited for the evening.

I have suffered several disappointments from tailors and periwig-makers, who, by neglecting to perform their work, withheld my patrons from court; and once failed of an establishment for life by the delay of a servant, sent to a neighbouring shop to replenish a snuff-box.

At last I thought my solicitude at an end, for an office fell into the gift of Hippodamus's father, who, being then in the country, could not very speedily fill it, and whose fondness would not have suffered him to refuse his son a less reasonable request. Hippodamus therefore set forward with great expedition, and I expected every hour an account of his success. A long time I waited without any intelligence, but at last received a letter from Newmarket, by which I was informed that the races were begun, and I knew

the vehemence of his passions too well to imagine that he could refuse himself his favourite amusement.

You will not wonder that I was at last weary of the patronage of young men, especially as I found them not generally to promise much greater fidelity as they advanced in life; for I observed that what they gained in steadiness they lost in benevolence, and grew colder to my interest as they became more diligent to promote their own. I was convinced that their liberality was only profuseness, that as chance directed, they were equally generous to vice and virtue, that they were warm but because they were thoughtless, and counted the support of a friend only amongst other gratifications of passion.

My resolution was now to ingratiate myself with men whose reputation was established, whose high stations enabled them to prefer me, and whose age exempted them from sudden changes of inclination. I was considered as a man of parts, and therefore easily found admission to the table of Hilarius, the celebrated orator, renowned equally for the extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his diction, and the acuteness of his wit. Hilarius received me with an appearance of great satisfaction, produced to me all his friends, and directed to me that part of his discourse in which he most endeavoured to display his imagination. I had now learned my own interest enough to supply him opportunities for smart remarks and gay sallies, which I never failed to echo and applaud. Thus I was gaining every hour on his affections, till unfortunately, when the assembly was more splendid than usual, his desire of admiration prompted him to turn his raillery upon me. I bore it for some time with great submission, and success encouraged him to redouble his attacks; at last my vanity prevailed over my prudence, I retorted his irony with such spirit, that Hilarius, unaccustomed to resistance, was disconcerted, and soon found means of convincing me, that his purpose was not to encourage a rival, but to foster a parasite.

I was then taken into the familiarity of Argutio, a nobleman eminent for judgment and criticism. He had contributed to my reputation by the praises which he had often bestowed upon my writings, in which he owned that there were proofs of a genius that might rise to high degrees of excellence, when time or information had reduced its exuberance. He therefore required me to consult him before the publication of any new performance, and commonly proposed innumerable alterations, without sufficient attention to the general design, or regard to my form of style, and mode of imagination. But these corrections he never failed to press as indispensably necessary, and thought the least delay of compliance an act of rebellion. The pride of an author made this treatment insufferable, and I thought any tyranny easier to be borne than that which took from me the use of my understanding.

My next patron was Eutyches the statesman, who was wholly engaged in public affairs, and seemed to have no ambition but to be powerful and rich. I found his favour more permanent than that of the others; for there was a certain price at which it might be bought; he allowed nothing to humour or to affection, but was always ready to pay liberally for the service that he required. His demands were, indeed, very often such as virtue could not easily consent to gratify; but virtue is not to be consulted when men are to raise their fortunes by the favour of the great. His measures were censured; I wrote in his defence, and was recompensed with a place, of which the profits were never received by me without the pangs of remembering that they were the reward of wickedness—a reward which nothing but that necessity which the consumption of my little estate in these wild pursuits had brought upon me, hindered me from throwing back in the face of my corrupter.

At this time my uncle died without a will, and I became heir to a small fortune. I had resolution to throw off the splendour which reproached me to myself, and retire to an humbler state, in which I am now endeavouring to recover the dignity of virtue, and hope to make some reparation for my crime and follies, by informing others, who may be led after the same pageants, that they are about to engage in a course of life, in which they are to purchase, by a thousand miseries, the privilege of repentance.

I am, &c.

EUBULUS.

No. 28.] SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1750.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi. SENECA

To him, alas! to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flatt'ring his senseless pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go.

COWLEY.

I HAVE shown, in a late essay, to what errors men are hourly betrayed by a mistaken opinion of their own powers, and a negligent inspection of their own character. But as I then confined my observations to common occurrences and familiar scenes, I think it proper to inquire, how far a nearer acquaintance with ourselves is necessary to our preservation from crimes as well as follies, and how much the attentive study of our own minds may contribute to secure to us the approbation of that Being, to whom we are accountable for our thoughts and our actions, and whose favour must finally constitute our total happiness.

If it be reasonable to estimate the difficulty of any enterprise by frequent miscarriages, it may justly be concluded that it is not easy for a man to know himself, for wheresoever we turn our view, we shall find almost all, with whom we converse so nearly as to judge of their sentiments, indulging more favourable conceptions of their own virtue than they have been able to impress upon others, and congratulating themselves upon degrees of excellence, which their fondest admirers cannot allow them to have attained.

Those representations of imaginary virtue are generally considered as arts of hypocrisy, and as snares laid for confidence and praise. But I believe the suspicion often unjust; those who thus propagate their own reputation, only extend the

fraud by which they have been themselves deceived; for this failing is incident to numbers, who seem to live without designs, competitions, or pursuits; it appears on occasions which promise no accession of honour or of profit, and to persons from whom very little is to be hoped or feared. It is, indeed, not easy to tell how far we may be blinded by the love of ourselves, when we reflect how much a secondary passion can cloud our judgment, and how few faults a man, in the first raptures of love, can discover in the person or conduct of his mistress.

To lay open all the sources from which error flows in upon him who contemplates his own character would require more exact knowledge of the human heart, than perhaps the most acute and laborious observers have acquired. And since falsehood may be diversified without end, it is not unlikely that every man admits an imposture, in some respect peculiar to himself, as his views have been accidentally directed, or his ideas particularly combined.

Some fallacies, however, there are, more frequently insidious, which it may, perhaps, not be useless to detect; because, though they are gross, they may be fatal, and because nothing but attention is necessary to defeat them.

One sophism by which men persuade themselves that they have those virtues which they really want, is formed by the substitution of single acts for habits. A miser who once relieved a friend from the danger of a prison, suffers his imagination to dwell for ever upon his own heroic generosity; he yields his heart up to indignation at those who are blind to merit, or insensible to misery, and who can please themselves with the enjoyment of that wealth, which they never permit others to partake. From any censures of the world, or reproaches of his conscience, he has an appeal to action and to knowledge: and though his whole life is a course of rapacity and avarice, he concludes himself to be tender and liberal, because he has once performed an act of liberality and tenderness.

As a glass which magnifies objects by the approach of one end to the eye, lessens them by the application of the other, so vices are extenuated by the inversion of that fallacy, by which virtues are augmented. Those faults which we cannot conceal from our own notice, are considered, however frequent, not as habitual corruptions, or settled practices, but as casual failures, and single lapses. A man who has from year to year set his country to sale, either for the gratification of his ambition or resentment, confesses that the heat of party now and then betrays the severest virtue to measures that cannot be seriously defended. He that spends his days and nights in riot and debauchery, owns that his passions oftentimes overpower his resolutions. But each comforts himself that his faults are not without precedent, for the best and the wisest men have given way to the violence of sudden temptations.

There are men who always confound the praise of goodness with the practice, and who believe themselves mild and moderate, charitable, and faithful, because they have exerted their eloquence in commendation of mildness, fidelity, and other virtues. This is an error almost universal among those that converse much with dependents, with such whose fear or interest dispose them to a seeming reverence for any declamation, however enthusiastic, and submission to any boast, however arrogant. Having none to recall their attention to their lives, they rate themselves by the goodness of their opinions, and forget how much more easily men may show their virtue in their talk than in their actions.

The tribe is likewise very numerous of those who regulate their lives, not by the standard of religion, but the measure of other men's virtue; who lull their own remorse with the remembrance of crimes more atrocious than their own, and seem to believe they are not bad, while another can be found worse.

For escaping these and a thousand other deceits, many expedients have been proposed. Some have recommended the frequent consultation of a wise friend, admitted to intimacy, and encouraged to sincerity. But this appears a remedy by no means adapted to general use: for in order to secure the virtue of one, it presupposes more virtue in two than will generally be found. In the first, such a desire of rectitude and amendment, as may incline him to hear his own accusation from the mouth of him whom he esteems, and by whom, therefore, he will always hope that his faults are not discovered; and in the second, such zeal and honesty, as will make him content for his friend's advantage to lose his kindness.

A long life may be passed without finding a friend in whose understanding and virtue we can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and sincerity. A weak man, however honest, is not qualified to judge. A man of the world, however penetrating, is not fit to counsel. Friends are often chosen for similitude of manners, and therefore each palliates the other's failings because they are his own. Friends are tender, and unwilling to give pain, or they are interested, and fearful to offend.

These objections have inclined others to advise, that he who would know himself, should consult his enemies, remember the reproaches that are vented to his face, and listen for the censures that are uttered in private. For his great business is to know his faults, and those malignity will discover, and resentment will reveal. But this precept may be often frustrated; for it seldom happens that rivals or opponents are suffered to come near enough to know our conduct with so much exactness, as that conscience should allow and reflect the accusation. The charge of an enemy is often totally false, and commonly so mingled with falsehood, that the mind takes advantage from the failure of one part to discredit the rest, and never suffers any disturbance afterward from such partial reports.

Yet it seems that enemies have been always found by experience the most faithful monitors; for adversity has ever been considered as the state in which a man most easily becomes acquainted with himself, and this effect it must produce by withdrawing flatterers, whose business it is to hide our weakness from us, or by giving loose to malice, and license to reproach; or at least by cutting off those pleasures which called us away from meditation on our conduct, and repressing that pride which too easily persuades us that we merit whatever we enjoy.

Part of these benefits it is in every man's power to procure himself, by assigning proper portions

of his life to the examination of the rest, and by putting himself frequently in such a situation, by retirement and abstraction, as may weaken the influence of external objects. By this practice he may obtain the solitude of adversity without its melancholy, its instructions without its censures, and its sensibility without its perturbations.

The necessity of setting the world at a distance from us, when we are to take a survey of ourselves, has sent many from high stations to the severities of a monastic life; and, indeed, every man deeply engaged in business, if all regard to another state be not extinguished, must have the conviction, though, perhaps, not the resolution of Valdesso, who, when he solicited Charles the Fifth to dismiss him, being asked, whether he retired upon disgust, answered that he laid down his commission, for no other reason but because *there ought to be some time for sober reflection between the life of a soldier and his death.*

There are few conditions which do not entangle us with sublunary hopes and fears, from which it is necessary to be at intervals disencumbered, that we may place ourselves in his presence who views effects in their causes, and actions in their motives; that we may, as Chillingworth expresses it, consider things as if there were no other beings in the world but God and ourselves: or, to use language yet more awful, *may commune with our own hearts and be still.*

Death, says Seneca, falls heavy upon him who is too much known to others, and too little to himself; and Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature, thought the study of our own hearts of so much importance, that he has recommended it from his tomb. *Sum* Joannes Jovianus Pontanus, *quem amaverunt bonæ Musæ, suspexerunt viri probi, honestaverunt reges domini; jam scis qui sim, vel qui potius fuerim; ego vero te, hospes, noscere in tenebris nequeo, sed teipsum ut noscas rogo.* "I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knowest now who I am, or more properly who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness cannot know thee, but I entreat thee to know thyself."

I hope every reader of this paper will consider himself as engaged to the observation of a precept, which the wisdom and virtue of all ages have concurred to enforce: a precept dictated by philosophers, inculcated by poets, and ratified by saints.

No. 29.] TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1750.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus:
Ridetque, si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidet——— HOR.

But God has wisely hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.
DRYDEN.

THERE is nothing recommended with greater frequency among the gayer poets of antiquity, than the secure possession of the present hour, and the dismission of all the cares which intrude upon our quiet, or hinder, by importunate perturbations, the enjoyment of those delights which our condition happens to set before us.

The ancient poets are, indeed, by no means unexceptionable teachers of morality; their precepts are to be always considered as the sallies of a genius, intent rather upon giving pleasure than instruction, eager to take every advantage of insinuation, and, provided the passions can be engaged on its side, very solicitous about the suffrage of reason.

The darkness and uncertainty through which the heathens were compelled to wander in the pursuit of happiness, may, indeed, be alleged as an excuse for many of their seducing invitations to immediate enjoyment, which the moderns, by whom they have been imitated, have not to plead. It is no wonder that such as had no promise of another state should eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imaginations, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals, and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servility of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errors and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment, that on these occasions they often warn their readers against inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet inactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resignation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endeavour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, in whose power Providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shows an equal ignorance of our proper sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that on which our thoughts can have no influence.

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprised; and, perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity, as gave previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected upon others that have less foresight. But the truth is, that things to come, except when they approach very nearly, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he

was deceived by their phantoms, nor ever realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprised because he is not disappointed, and he escapes disappointment because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is so justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which must always be suggested by the view of the world; but such a desponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life; a temper which keeps the man always in alarms; disposes him to judge of every thing in a manner that least favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs, of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been usual in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope, by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear, as well as to hope, and may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraints to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good, and for the reason that we ought not to hope too securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sudden accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborne, may become another proof of the false flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terror, by considering that our persecutors are weak and ignorant, and mortal like ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of unhappy incidents should never be suffered to disturb us before they happen; because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet must be lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether the sentiment be entirely just I shall not examine; but certainly if it be improper to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.

As we ought not to give way to fear, any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects both of fear and hope are yet uncertain, so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of the other, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity. It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination; every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and question the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you; when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety is painful without use. Every consideration, therefore, by which groundless terrors may be removed, adds something to human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the apparent duties, to make provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose; for he, doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety when he impairs his virtue.

No. 30.] SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1750.

——Vultus ubi tuus
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent. HOR.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial suns more radiant shine,
The day more glad appears.
ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

THERE are few tasks more ungrateful than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises. In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will on such occasions assert its merit, and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, Sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a public benefit. This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew; a very respecta

ble person, but somewhat austere in his manner; highly and deservedly valued by his near relations and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a larger society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I in the bloom of youth came into it, succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good humour, and benevolence, always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past: so long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm, one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they choose to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape; and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts or places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice, as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and though rest and composure are my peculiar joy, am worn out and harassed to death with journeys by men and women of quality, who never take one but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme, will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill bred as to take physic on purpose when they have reason to expect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour, that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally wherever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal, stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, and love? To one capable of answering and rewarding the greatest warmth and delicacy of sentiments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent people, who affectionately loved me, and treated me with the utmost honour and respect. It would be tedious to relate the variety of my adventures, and strange vicissitudes of my fortune in many different countries. Here in England there was a time when I lived according to my heart's desire. Whenever I appeared, public assemblies appointed for my reception were crowded with persons of quality and fashion, early dressed as for a court, to pay me their devoirs. Cheerful hospitality every where crowned my board, and I was looked upon in every country parish as a kind of social bond between the squire, the parson, and the tenants. The laborious poor every where blessed my appearance; they do so still, and keep their best clothes to do me honour; though as much as I delight in the honest country folks, they do now and then throw a pot of ale at my head, and sometimes an unlucky boy will drive his cricket-ball full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were persons who thought me too demure and grave. I must forsooth by all means be instructed by foreign masters, and taught to dance and play. This method of education was so contrary to my genius, formed for much nobler entertainments, that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very different set. They were so excessively scandalized at the gayety of my appearance, as not only to despoil me of the foreign fopperies, the paint and the patches that I had been tricked out with by my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed me of every innocent ornament I had from my infancy been used to gather in the fields and gardens; nay, they blacked my face, and covered me all over with a habit of mourning, and that too very coarse and awkward. I was now obliged to spend my whole life in hearing sermons; nor permitted so much as to smile upon any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a perfect bugbear to all children and young folks. Wherever I came there was a general hush, and immediate stop to all pleasantness of look or discourse; and not being permitted to talk with them in my own language at that time, they took such a disgust to me in those tedious hours of yawning; that having transmitted it to their children, I cannot now be heard, though it is long since I have recovered my natural form and pleasing tone of voice. Would they but receive my visits kindly, and listen to what I could tell them—let me say it without vanity—how charming a companion should I be! to every one could I talk on the subjects most interesting and most pleasing. With the great and ambitious, I would discourse of honours and advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the sure method to attain them. I would teach them to put out their money on the best interest, and instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure and improve it to the highest degree. The beauty should learn of me how to preserve an everlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and relaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the truth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt but many will be desirous of improving their acquaintance with me; and that I may not be thought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, how I wish to be received.

You must know I equally hate lazy idleness and hurry. I would every where be welcomed at a tolerably early hour with decent good-humour and gratitude. I must be attended in the great halls, peculiarly appropriated to me, with respect; but I do not insist upon finery: propriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is all I require. I must at dinner be treated with a temperate, but cheerful social meal; both the neighbours and the poor should be the better for me. Some time I must have *tête-à-tête* with my kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit should be spent in pleasant walks and airings among sets of agreeable people, in such discourse as I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some few selected out of those numberless books that are

dedicated to me, and go by my name. A name that, alas! as the world stands at present, makes them oftener thrown aside than taken up. As those conversations and books should be both well chosen, to give some advice on that head may possibly furnish you with a future paper, and any thing you shall offer on my behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. Rambler,

Your faithful friend and servant,

SUNDAY.*

No. 31.] TUESDAY, JULY 3, 1750.

Non ego mendosos ausim defendere mores,
Falsaque provitiis arma tenere meis.—OVID.

Corrupted manners I shall ne'er defend;
Nor, falsely witty, for my faults contend.
ELPHINSTON.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the narrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discern that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves, and that with whatever ease they give up the claim of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from faults in their own conduct, and from error in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate opposition, which we may observe made to confutation however clear, and to reproof however tender, is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose that those who break out into fury at the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered, as either shameful or wonderful, and they would not receive with so much emotion intelligence which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, *I knew that my son was mortal.* He that is convinced of an error, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of straining for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true that most of our passions are excited by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting, that to be considered as subject to fallacies of ratiocination, or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding rage and vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things in which neither of the disputants have any other interest, than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted: and the observation of every day will give new proofs with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments, how often the state of the question is altered, how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented, and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

Of all mortals none seem to have been more infected with this species of vanity, than the race of writers, whose reputation, arising solely from their understanding, gives them a very delicate sensibility of any violence attempted on their literary honour. It is not unpleasing to remark with what solicitude men of acknowledged abilities will endeavour to palliate absurdities and reconcile contradictions, only to obviate criticisms to which all human performances must ever be exposed, and from which they can never suffer, but when they teach the world, by a vain and ridiculous impatience, to think them of importance.

Dryden, whose warmth of fancy, and haste of composition, very frequently hurried him into inaccuracies, heard himself sometimes exposed to ridicule for having said in one of his tragedies,

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.

That no man could at once follow and be followed, was, it may be thought, too plain to be long disputed; and the truth is, that Dryden was apparently betrayed into the blunder by the double meaning of the word Fate, to which in the former part of the verse he had annexed the idea of Fortune, and in the latter that of Death; so that the sense only was, *Though pursued by Death, I will not resign myself to despair, but will follow Fortune, and do and suffer what is appointed.* This, however, was not completely expressed, and Dryden being determined not to give way to his critics, never confessed that he had been surprised by an ambiguity; but finding luckily in Virgil an account of a man moving in a circle, with this expression, *Et se sequiturque fugitque,* "Here," says he, "is the passage in imitation of which I wrote the line that my critics were pleased to condemn as nonsense; not but I may sometimes write nonsense, though they have not the fortune to find it."

Every one sees the folly of such mean doublings to escape the pursuit of criticism; nor is there a single reader of this poet, who would not have paid him greater veneration, had he shown consciousness enough of his own superiority to set such cavils at defiance, and owned that he

* This paper was written by Miss Catharine Talbot, daughter to the Rev. Ed. Talbot, archdeacon of Berks, and preacher at the Rolls. She died Jan. 9, 1770. See Preface to the Rambler, in "British Essayists." vol. xix—C.

sometimes slipped into errors by the tumult of his imagination, and the multitude of his ideas.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude, see a man persist in a project which he has found to be impracticable, live in an inconvenient house because it was contrived by himself, or wear a coat of a particular cut, in hopes by perseverance to bring it into fashion. These are indeed follies, but they are only follies, and, however wild and ridiculous, can very little affect others.

But such pride, once indulged, too frequently operates upon more important objects, and inclines men not only to vindicate their errors, but their vices; to persist in practices which their own hearts condemn, only lest they should seem to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the advice of others; or to search for sophisms tending to the confusion of all principles, and the evacuation of all duties, that they may not appear to act what they are not able to defend.

Let every man, who finds vanity so far predominant, as to betray him to the danger of this last degree of corruption, pause a moment to consider what will be the consequences of the plea which he is about to offer for a practice to which he knows himself not led at first by reason, but impelled by the violence of desire, surprised by the suddenness of passion, or seduced by the soft approaches of temptation, and by imperceptible gradations of guilt. Let him consider what he is going to commit, by forcing his understanding to patronise those appetites, which it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to defend it, and good and evil, when they have been once shown, are so easily distinguished, that such apologists seldom gain proselytes to their party, nor have their fallacies power to deceive any but those whose desires have clouded their discernment. All that the best faculties thus employed can perform is, to persuade the hearers that the man is hopeless whom they only thought vicious, that corruption has passed from his manners to his principles, that all endeavours for his recovery are without prospect of success, and that nothing remains but to avoid him as infectious, or hunt him down as destructive.

But if it be supposed that he may impose on his audience by partial representations of consequences, intricate deductions of remote causes, or perplexed combinations of ideas, which, having various relations, appear different as viewed on different sides; that he may sometimes puzzle the weak and well-meaning, and now and then seduce, by the admiration of his abilities, a young mind still fluctuating in unsettled notions, and neither fortified by instruction nor enlightened by experience; yet what must be the event of such a triumph! A man cannot spend all this life in frolic: age, or disease, or solitude, will bring some hours of serious consideration, and it will then afford no comfort to think, that he has extended the dominion of vice, that he has loaded himself with the crimes of others, and can never know the extent of his own wickedness, or make reparation for the mischief that he has caused. There is not, perhaps, in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles, of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return, of having blinded them to every beauty but the paint of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the syrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice. men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves; by often contending they grow sincere in the cause; and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them. They are then at the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having that light rekindled in their minds, which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings, either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them; for, not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the tears of saints, and the dying terrors of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well known that Cæsar wrote an account of the errors committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is perhaps in rational estimation greater than Cæsar's, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. "So much," says Celsus, "does the open and artless confession of an error become a man conscious that he has enough remaining to support his character."

As all error is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errors should know his retraction, and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example be taught amendment.

No. 32.] SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1750.

Ὁσσά τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἄν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πράως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει·
Ἰᾶσθαι δὲ πρέπει κάθοσον δύνῃ.

PYTHAG.

Of all the woes that load the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou canst.——— ELPHINSTON.

So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topics of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers, that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection, were the stoics, or scholars of

Zeno, whose wild enthusiastic virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbade them to be counted any longer among the objects of terror or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

This edict was, I think, not universally observed: for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses; for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne; and, therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched, which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being; all attempts therefore to decline it wholly are useless and vain; the armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side, the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points, but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which Heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

Let pain deserved without complaint be borne.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether more necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered, that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped; and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward which He, by whom it is inflicted, will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgments which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may lawfully struggle; for the calamities of life, like the necessities of nature, are calls to labour and exercises of diligence. When we feel any pressure of distress, we are not to conclude that we can only obey the will of Heaven by languishing under it, any more than when we perceive the pain of thirst, we are to imagine that water is prohibited. Of misfortune it never can be certainly known whether, as proceeding from the hand of God, it is an act of favour or of punishment: but since all the ordinary dispensations of Providence are to be interpreted according to the general analogy of things, we may conclude that we have a right to remove one inconvenience as well as another; that we are only to take care lest we purchase ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpose, whether of reward or severity, will be answered by the labours which he lays us under the necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any state than in diseases intensely painful, which may indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to strain the powers of life to their utmost stretch, and leave very little of the attention vacant to precept or reproof. In this state the nature of man requires some indulgence, and every extravagance but impiety may be easily forgiven him. Yet, lest we should think ourselves too soon entitled to the mournful privileges of irresistible misery, it is proper to reflect, that the utmost anguish which

human wit can contrive, or human malice can inflict, has been borne with constancy; and that if the pains of disease be, as I believe they are, sometimes greater than those of artificial torture, they are therefore in their own nature shorter: the vital frame is quickly broken, or the union between soul and body is for a time suspended by insensibility, and we soon cease to feel our maladies when they once become too violent to be borne. I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all that can be inflicted on the other, whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be separated sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on our passions, such as diminution of fortune, loss of friends, or declension of character, the chief danger of impatience is upon the first attack, and many expedients have been contrived, by which the blow may be broken. Of these the most general precept is, not to take pleasure in any thing, of which it is not in our power to secure the possession to ourselves. This counsel, when we consider the enjoyment of any terrestrial advantage, as opposite to a constant and habitual solicitude for future felicity, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by that authority which cannot be disputed; but, in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see lest our eyes should light upon deformity? It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the God of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the Lord, whether he gives or takes away.*

No. 33.] Tuesday, July 10, 1750.

Quod caret alterna requie durabile non est.

OVID.

Alternate rest and labour long endure.

In the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure, and constant plenty, under the protection of Rest; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits, which, without culture, fell ripe into their hands, and slept under bowers arched by nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each, though there was more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered violence and fraud, and theft, and rapine. Soon after pride and envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons: part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief; Famine, with a thousand diseases which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havoc among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of Famine, who scattered the ground every where with carcasses, Labour came down upon earth. Labour was the son of Necessity, the nurseling of Hope, and the pupil of Art; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun: he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals! see here the power to whom you are consigned, and from whom you are to hope for all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have long languished under the dominion of Rest, an impotent and deceitful goddess, who can neither protect nor relieve you, but resigns you to the first attacks of either Famine or Disease, and suffers her shades to be invaded by every enemy, and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of Labour. I will teach you to remedy the sterility of the earth, and the severity of the sky; I will compel summer to find provisions for the winter; I will force the waters to give you their fish, the air its fowls, and the forest its beasts; I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and bring out from the caverns of the mountains metals which shall give strength to your hands, and security to your bodies, by which you may be covered from the assaults of the fiercest beasts, and with which you shall fell the oak, and divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered Labour as their only friend, and hasted to his command. He led them out to the fields and mountains, and showed them how to open mines, to level hills, to

drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn, and plantations of fruit-trees: and nothing was seen but heaps of grain, and baskets of fruit, full tables, and crowded storehouses.

Thus Labour and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and saw Famine gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of Lassitude, who was known by her sunk eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning; at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom, they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitations of Labour, and began to wish again for the golden hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of Rest, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended to dedicate the remaining part of their lives. Rest had not left the world; they quickly found her, and, to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which Labour had procured them.

Rest therefore took leave of the groves and valleys, which she had hitherto inhabited, and entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and slumbered away the winter upon beds of down, and the summer in artificial grottos with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity which they knew before their engagements with Labour: nor was her dominion entirely without control, for she was obliged to share it with Luxury, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last Luxury betrayed her charge, and let in Disease to seize upon her worshippers. Rest then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers; who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

Rest had not always the same enemy; in some places she escaped the incursions of Disease; but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently, when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, Satiety would enter with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of Rest. No sooner was she seated than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediately lost their verdure, and their inhabitants desisted from their melody, the breeze sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves, and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wandering about they knew not whither, in quest they knew not of what; no voice was heard but of complaints that mentioned no pain, and murmurs that could tell of no misfortune.

Rest had now lost her authority. Her followers again began to treat her with contempt; some of them united themselves more closely to Luxury, who promised by her arts to drive Satiety away; and others, that were more wise, or had more fortitude, went back again to Labour, by whom they were indeed protected from Satiety, but delivered up in time to Lassitude, and forced by her to the bowers of Rest.

Thus Rest and Labour equally perceived their reign of short duration and uncertain tenure, and their empire liable to inroads from those who were alike enemies to both. They each found their subjects unfaithful, and ready to desert them upon every opportunity. Labour saw the riches which he had given always carried away as an offering to Rest, and Rest found her votaries in every exigence flying from her to beg help of Labour. They, therefore, at last determined upon an interview, in which they agreed to divide the world between them, and govern it alternately, allotting the dominion of the day to one, and that of the night to the other, and promised to guard the frontiers of each other, so that, whenever hostilities were attempted, Satiety should be intercepted by Labour, and Lassitude expelled by Rest. Thus the ancient quarrel was appeased, and as hatred is often succeeded by its contrary, Rest afterwards became pregnant by Labour, and was delivered of Health, a benevolent goddess, who consolidated the union of her parents, and contributed to the regular vicissitudes of their reign, by dispensing her gifts to those only who shared their lives in just proportions between Rest and Labour.

No. 34.] SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1750.

——Non sine vano
Aurarum et silvæ metu.—— HOR.

Alarmed with every rising gale,
In every wood, in every vale ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been censured for having hitherto dedicated so few of my speculations to the ladies; and indeed the moralist, whose instructions are accommodated only to one half of the human species, must be confessed not sufficiently to have extended his views. Yet it is to be considered, that masculine duties afford more room for counsels and observations, as they are less uniform, and connected with things more subject to vicissitude and accident; we therefore find that in philosophical discourses which teach by precept, or historical narratives that instruct by example, the peculiar virtues or faults of women fill but a small part; perhaps, generally, too small, for so much of our domestic happiness is in their hands, and their influence is so great upon our earliest years, that the universal interest of the world requires them to be well instructed in their province; nor can it be thought proper that the qualities by which so much pain or pleasure may be given, should be left to the direction of chance.

I have, therefore, willingly given a place in my paper to a letter, which, perhaps, may not be wholly useless to them whose chief ambition is to

please, as it shows how certainly the end is missed by absurd and injudicious endeavours at distinction.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

I am a young gentleman at my own disposal, with a considerable estate; and having passed through the common forms of education, spent some time in foreign countries, and made myself distinguished since my return in the politest company, I am now arrived at that part of life in which every man is expected to settle, and provide for the continuation of his lineage. I withstood for some time the solicitations and remonstrances of my aunts and uncles, but at last was persuaded to visit Anthea, an heiress, whose land lies contiguous to mine, and whose birth and beauty are without objection. Our friends declared that we were born for each other; all those on both sides who had no interest in hindering our union, contributed to promote it, and were conspiring to hurry us into matrimony, before we had any opportunity of knowing one another. I was, however, too old to be given away without my own consent; and having happened to pick up an opinion, which to many of my relations seemed extremely odd, that a man might be unhappy with a large estate, determined to obtain a nearer knowledge of the person with whom I was to pass the remainder of my time. To protract the courtship was by no means difficult, for Anthea had a wonderful facility of evading questions which I seldom repeated, and of barring approaches which I had no great eagerness to press.

Thus the time passed away in visits and civilities without any ardent professions of love, or formal offers of settlements. I often attended her to public places, in which, as is well known, all behaviour is so much regulated by custom, that very little insight can be gained into the private character, and therefore I was not yet able to inform myself of her humour and inclinations.

At last I ventured to propose to her to make one of a small party, and spend a day in viewing a seat and gardens a few miles distant; and having, upon her compliance, collected the rest of the company, I brought, at the hour, a coach which I had borrowed from an acquaintance, having delayed to buy one myself till I should have an opportunity of taking the lady's opinion, for whose use it was intended. Anthea came down, but as she was going to step into the coach, started back with great appearance of terror, and told us that she durst not enter, for the shocking colour of the lining had so much the air of the mourning-coach in which she followed her aunt's funeral three years before, that she should never have her poor dear aunt out of her head.

I knew that it was not for lovers to argue with their mistresses; I therefore sent back the coach, and got another more gay. Into this we all entered, the coachman began to drive, and we were amusing ourselves with the expectation of what we should see, when, upon a small inclination of the carriage, Anthea screamed out that we were overthrown. We were obliged to fix all our attention upon her, which she took care to keep up by renewing her outcries, at every corner where we had occasion to turn; at intervals she entertained us with fretful complaints of the uneasiness of the coach, and obliged me to call several times on the coachman to take care and drive without jolting. The poor fellow endeavoured to please us, and therefore moved very slowly, till Anthea found out that this pace would only keep us longer on the stones, and desired that I would order him to make more speed. He whipped his horses, the coach jolted again, and Anthea very complaisantly told us how much she repented that she made one of our company.

At last we got into the smooth road, and began to think our difficulties at an end, when, on a sudden, Anthea saw a brook before us, which she could not venture to pass. We were, therefore, obliged to alight, that we might walk over the bridge; but when we came to it, we found it so narrow, that Anthea durst not set her foot upon it, and was content, after long consultation, to call the coach back, and with innumerable precautions, terrors and lamentations, crossed the brook.

It was necessary after this delay to mend our pace, and directions were accordingly given to the coachman, when Anthea informed us, that it was common for the axle to catch fire with a quick motion, and begged of me to look out every minute, lest we should all be consumed. I was forced to obey, and give her from time to time the most solemn declarations that all was safe, and that I hoped we should reach the place without losing our lives either by fire or water.

Thus we passed on, over ways soft and hard, with more or with less speed, but always with new vicissitudes of anxiety. If the ground was hard, we were jolted; if soft, we were sinking. If we went fast we should be overturned; if slowly, we should never reach the place. At length she saw something which she called a cloud, and began to consider that at that time of the year it frequently thundered. This seemed to be the capital terror, for after that the coach was suffered to move on; and no danger was thought too dreadful to be encountered, provided she could get into a house before the thunder.

Thus our whole conversation passed in dangers, and cares, and fears, and consolations, and stories of ladies dragged in the mire, forced to spend all the night on a heath, drowned in rivers, or burnt with lightning; and no sooner had a hairbreadth escape set us free from one calamity, but we were threatened with another.

At length we reached the house where we intended to regale ourselves, and I proposed to Anthea the choice of a great number of dishes, which the place, being well provided for entertainment, happened to afford. She made some objection to every thing that was offered; one thing she hated at that time of the year, another she could not bear since she had seen it spoiled at Lady Feedwell's table, another she was sure they could not dress at this house, and another she could not touch without French sauce. At last, she fixed her mind upon salmon, but there was no salmon in the house. It was however procured with great expedition, and when it came to the table, she found that her fright had taken away her stomach, which indeed she thought no great loss, for she could never believe that any thing at an inn could be cleanly got.

Dinner was now over, and the company proposed, for I was now past the condition of making overtures, that we should pursue our original design of visiting the gardens. Anthea declared that she could not imagine what pleasure we expected from the sight of a few green trees and a little gravel, and two or three pits of clear water; that for her part she hated walking till the cool of the evening, and thought it very likely to rain; and again wished that she had stayed at home. We then reconciled ourselves to our disappointment, and began to talk on common subjects, when Anthena told us that since we came to see gardens, she would not hinder our satisfaction. We all arose, and walked through the inclosures for some time, with no other trouble than the necessity of watching lest a frog should hop across the way, which Anthea told us would certainly kill her, if she should happen to see him.

Frogs, as it fell out, there were none; but when we were within a furlong of the gardens, Anthea saw some sheep, and heard the wether clink his bell, which she was certain was not hung upon him for nothing, and therefore no assurances nor entreaties should prevail upon her to go a step further; she was sorry to disappoint the company, but her life was dearer to her than ceremony.

We came back to the inn, and Anthea now discovered that there was no time to be lost in returning, for the night would come upon us, and a thousand misfortunes might happen in the dark. The horses were immediately harnessed, and Anthea, having wondered what could seduce her to stay so long, was eager to set out. But we had now a new scene of terror, every man we saw was a robber, and we were ordered sometimes to drive hard, lest a traveller whom we saw behind should overtake us; and sometimes to stop, lest we should come up to him who was passing before us. She alarmed many an honest man, by begging him to spare her life as he passed by the coach, and drew me into fifteen quarrels with persons who increased her fright, by kindly stopping to inquire whether they could assist us. At last we came home, and she told her company next day what a pleasant ride she had been taking.

I suppose, Sir, I need not inquire of you what deductions may be made from this narrative, nor what happiness can arise from the society of that woman who mistakes cowardice for elegance, and imagines all delicacy to consist in refusing to be pleased.

I am, &c.

No. 35.] TUESDAY, JULY 17, 1750.

——Non pronuba Juno,
Non Hymenæus adest, non illi gratia lecto.

OVID.

Without connubial Juno's aid they wed;
Nor Hymen nor the Graces bless the bed.

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have hitherto delayed the performance of the promise, by which you gave us reason to hope for another paper upon matrimony, I imagine you desirous of collecting more materials than your own experience or observation can supply; and I shall therefore lay candidly before you an account of my own entrance into the conjugal state.

I was about eight and twenty years old, when having tried the diversions of the town till I began to be weary, and being awakened into attention to more serious business, by the failure of an attorney, to whom I had implicitly trusted the conduct of my fortune, I resolved to take my estate into my own care, and methodise my whole life acording to the strictest rules of economical prudence.

In pursuance of this scheme I took leave of my acquaintance, who dismissed me with numberless jests upon my new system; having first endeavoured to divert me from a design so little worthy of a man of wit, by ridiculous accounts of the ignorance and rusticity into which many had sunk in their retirement, after having distinguished themselves in taverns and play-houses, and given hopes of rising to uncommon eminence among the gay part of mankind.

When I came first into the country, which, by a neglect not uncommon among young heirs, I had never seen since the death of my father, I found every thing in such confusion, that being utterly without practice in business, I had great, difficulties to encounter in disentangling the perplexities of my circumstances; they however gave way to diligent application; and I perceived that the advantage of keeping my own accounts would very much overbalance the time which they could require.

I had now visited my tenants, surveyed my land, and repaired the old house, which, for some years, had been running to decay. These proofs of pecuniary wisdom began to recommend me as a sober, judicious, thriving gentleman, to all my graver neighbours of the country, who never failed to celebrate my management in opposition to Thriftless and Latterwit, two smart fellows, who had estates in the same part of the kingdom, which they visited now and then in a frolic, to take up their rents beforehand, debauch a milkmaid, make a feast for the village, and tell stories of their own intrigues, and then rode post back to town to spend their money.

It was doubtful, however, for some time, whether I should be able to hold my resolution; but a short perseverance removed all suspicions. I rose every day in reputation, by the decency of my conversation and the regularity of my conduct, and was mentioned with a great regard at the assizes, as a man very fit to be put in com . mission for the peace.

During the confusion of my affairs, and the daily necessity of visiting farms, adjusting contracts, letting leases, and superintending repairs, I found very little vacuity in my life, and therefore had not many thoughts of marriage; but, in a little while the tumult of business subsided, and the exact method which I had established enabled me to despatch my accounts with great facility. I had, therefore, now upon my hands, the task of finding means to spend my time, without falling back into the poor amusements which I had hitherto indulged, or changing them for the sports of the field, which I saw pursued with so much eagerness by the gentlemen of the country, that they were indeed the only pleasures in which I could promise myself any partaker.

The inconvenience of this situation naturally disposed me to wish for a companion, and the known value of my estate, with my reputation for frugality and prudence, easily gained me admission into every family; for I soon found that no inquiry was made after any other virtue, nor any testimonial necessary, but of my freedom from incumbrances, and my care of what they termed the *main chance*. I saw, not without indignation, the eagerness with which the daughters, wherever I came, were set out to show; nor could I consider them in a state much different from prostitution, when I found them ordered to play their airs before me, and to exhibit, by some seeming chance, specimens of their music, their work, or their housewifery. No sooner was I placed at table, than the young lady was called upon to pay me some civility or other; nor could I find means of escaping, from either father or mother, some account of their daughter's excellences, with a declaration that they were now leaving the world, and had no business on this side the grave, but to see their children happily disposed of; that she whom I had been pleased to compliment at table was indeed the chief pleasure of their age, so good, so dutiful, so great a relief to her mamma in the care of the house, and so much her papa's favourite for her cheerfulness and wit, that it would be with the last reluctance that they should part; but to a worthy gentleman in the neighbourhood, whom they might often visit, they would not so far consult their own gratification, as to refuse her; and their tenderness should be shown in her fortune, whenever a suitable settlement was proposed.

As I knew these overtures not to proceed from any preference of me before another equally rich, I could not but look with pity on young persons condemned to be set to auction, and made cheap by injudicious commendations; for how could they know themselves offered and rejected a hundred times, without some loss of that soft elevation, and maiden dignity, so necessary to the completion of female excellence?

I shall not trouble you with a history of the stratagems practised upon my judgment, or the allurements tried upon my heart, which, if you have, in any part of your life, been acquainted with rural politics you will easily conceive. Their arts have no great variety, they think nothing worth their care but money, and supposing its influence the same upon all the world, seldom endeavour to deceive by any other means than false computations.

I will not deny that, by hearing myself loudly commended for my discretion, I began to set some value upon my character, and was unwilling to lose my credit by marrying for love. I therefore resolved to know the fortune of the lady whom I should address, before I inquired after her wit, delicacy, or beauty.

This determination led me to Mitissa, the daughter of Chrysophilus, whose person was at least without deformity, and whose manners were free from reproach, as she had been bred up at a distance from all common temptations. To Mitissa therefore I obtained leave from her parents to pay my court, and was referred by her again to her father, whose direction she was resolved to follow. The question then was, only, what should be settled? The old gentleman made an enormous demand, with which I refused to comply. Mitissa was ordered to exert her power; she told me, that if I could refuse her papa I had no love for her; that she was an unhappy creature, and that I was a perfidious man; then she burst into tears, and fell into fits. All this, as I was no passionate lover, had little effect. She next refused to see me, and because I thought myself obliged to write in terms of distress, they had once hopes of starving me into measures; but, finding me inflexible, the father complied with my proposal, and told me he liked me the more for being so good at a bargain.

I was now married to Mitissa, and was to experience the happiness of a match made without passion. Mitissa soon discovered that she was equally prudent with myself, and had taken a husband only to be at her own command, and have a chariot at her own call. She brought with her an old maid recommended by her mother, who taught her all the arts of domestic management, and was, on every occasion, her chief agent and directress. They soon invented one reason or other to quarrel with all my servants, and either prevailed on me to turn them away, or treated them so ill that they left me of themselves, and always supplied their places with some brought from my wife's relations. Thus they established a family, over which I had no authority, and which was in a perpetual conspiracy against me; for Mitissa considered herself as having a separate interest, and thought nothing her own, but what she laid up without my knowledge. For this reason she brought me false accounts of the expenses of the house, joined with my tenants in complaints of hard times, and by means of a steward of her own, took rewards for soliciting abatements of the rent. Her great hope is to outlive me, that she may enjoy what she has thus accumulated, and therefore she is always contriving some improvements of her jointure land, and once tried to procure an injunction to hinder me from felling timber upon it for repairs. Her father and mother assist her in her projects, and are frequently hinting that she is ill used, and reproaching me with the presents that other ladies receive from their husbands.

Such, Sir, was my situation for seven years, till at last my patience was exhausted, and having one day invited her father to my house, I laid the state of my affairs before him, detected my wife in several of her frauds, turned out her steward, charged a constable with her maid, took my business in my own hands, reduced her to a settled allowance, and now write this account to warn others against marrying those whom they have no reason to esteem.

I am, &c.

No. 36.] SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1750.

Αμ' ἕποντο νομῆες
Τερπομενοι σύριγξι δόλον δ οὔτι προνόησαν.
HOMER.

——Piping on their reeds the shepherds go,
Nor fear an ambush nor suspect a foe. POPE.

THERE is scarcely any species of poetry that has allured more readers, or excited more writers, than the pastoral. It is generally pleasing, because it entertains the mind with representations

of scenes familiar to almost every imagination, and of which all can equally judge whether they are well described. It exhibits a life, to which we have been always accustomed to associate peace, and leisure, and innocence: and therefore we readily set open the heart for the admission of its images, which contribute to drive away cares and perturbations, and suffer ourselves, without resistance, to be transported to elysian regions, where we are to meet with nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentment; where every gale whispers pleasure, and every shade promises repose.

It has been maintained by some, who love to talk of what they do not know, that pastoral is the most ancient poetry; and, indeed, since it is probable that poetry is nearly of the same antiquity with rational nature, and since the life of the first men was certainly rural, we may reasonably conjecture, that, as their ideas would necessarily be borrowed from those objects with which they are acquainted, their composures being filled chiefly with such thoughts on the visible creation as must occur to the first observers, were pastoral hymns, like those which Milton introduces the original pair singing, in the day of innocence, to the praise of their Maker.

For the same reason that pastoral poetry was the first employment of the human imagination, it is generally the first literary amusement of our minds. We have seen fields, and meadows, and groves, from the time that our eyes opened upon life; and are pleased with birds, and brooks, and breezes, much earlier than we engage among the actions and passions of mankind. We are therefore delighted with rural pictures, because we know the original at an age when our curiosity can be very little awakened by descriptions of courts which we never beheld, or representations of passions which we never felt.

The satisfaction received from this kind of writing not only begins early, but lasts long; we do not, as we advance into the intellectual world, throw it away among other childish amusements and pastimes, but willingly return to it in any hour of indolence and relaxation. The images of true pastoral have always the power of exciting delight, because the works of nature, from which they are drawn, have always the same order and beauty, and continue to force themselves upon our thoughts, being at once obvious to the most careless regard, and more than adequate to the strongest reason, and severest contemplation. Our inclination to stillness and tranquillity is seldom much lessened by long knowledge of the busy and tumultuary part of the world. In childhood we turn our thoughts to the country, as to the region of pleasure; we recur to it in old age as a port of rest, and perhaps with that secondary and adventitious gladness, which every man feels on reviewing those places, or recollecting those occurrences, that contributed to his youthful enjoyments, and bring him back to the prime of life, when the world was gay with the bloom of novelty, when mirth wantoned at his side, and hope sparkled before him.

The sense of this universal pleasure has invited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances in which they have generally succeeded after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images in the same combination from one to another, till he that reads the title of a poem, may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man, after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his knowledge enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes.

The range of pastoral is indeed narrow: for though nature itself, philosophically considered, be inexhaustible, yet its general effects on the eye and on the ear are uniform, and incapable of much variety of description. Poetry cannot dwell upon the minuter distinctions, by which one species differs from another, without departing from that simplicity of grandeur which fills the imagination; nor dissect the latent qualities of things, without losing its general power of gratifying every mind by recalling its conceptions. However, as each age makes some discoveries, and those discoveries are by degrees generally known, as new plants or modes of culture are introduced, and by little and little become common, pastoral might receive, from time to time, small augmentations, and exhibit once in a century a scene somewhat varied.

But pastoral subjects have been often, like others, taken into the hands of those that were not qualified to adorn them, men to whom the face of nature was so little known, that they have drawn it only after their own imagination, and changed or distorted her features, that their portraits might appear something more than servile copies from their predecessors.

Not only the images of rural life, but the occasions on which they can be properly produced, are few and general. The state of a man confined to the employments and pleasures of the country, is so little diversified, and exposed to so few of those accidents which produce perplexities, terrors, and surprises, in more complicated transactions, that he can be shown but seldom in such circumstances as attract curiosity. His ambition is without policy, and his love without intrigue. He has no complaints to make of his rival, but that he is richer than himself; nor any disasters to lament, but a cruel mistress, or a bad harvest.

The conviction of the necessity of some new source of pleasure induced Sannazarius to remove the scene from the fields to the sea, to substitute fishermen for shepherds, and derive his sentiments from the piscatory life; for which he has been censured by succeeding critics, because the sea is an object of terror, and by no means proper to amuse the mind, and lay the passions asleep. Against this objection he might be defended by the established maxim, that the poet has a right to select his images, and is no more obliged to show the sea in a storm, than the land under an inundation; but may display all the pleasures, and conceal the dangers, of the water, as he may lay his shepherd under a shady beech, without giving him an ague, or letting a wild beast loose upon him.

There are, however, two defects in the piscatory eclogue, which perhaps cannot be supplied. The sea, though in hot countries it is considered by those who live, like Sannazarius, upon the coast, as a place of pleasure and diversion, has notwithstanding, much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer. When he has once shown the sun rising or setting upon it, curled its waters

with the vernal breeze, rolled the waves in gentle succession to the shore, and enumerated the fish sporting in the shallows, he has nothing remaining but what is common to all other poetry, the complaint of a nymph for a drowned lover, or the indignation of a fisher that his oysters are refused, and Mycon's accepted.

Another obstacle to the general reception of this kind of poetry, is the ignorance of maritime pleasures, in which the greater part of mankind must always live. To all the inland inhabitants of every region, the sea is only known as an immense diffusion of waters, over which men pass from one country to another, and in which life is frequently lost. They have therefore no opportunity of tracing in their own thoughts the descriptions of winding shores and calm bays, nor can look on the poem in which they are mentioned, with other sensations than on a sea chart, or the metrical geography of Dionysius.

This defect Sannazarius was hindered from perceiving by writing in a learned language to readers generally acquainted with the works of nature; but if he had made his attempt in any vulgar tongue, he would soon have discovered how vainly he had endeavoured to make that loved, which was not understood.

I am afraid it will not be found easy to improve the pastorals of antiquity, by any great additions or diversifications. Our descriptions may indeed differ from those of Virgil, as an English from an Italian summer, and, in some respects, as modern from ancient life; but as nature is in both countries nearly the same, and as poetry has to do rather with the passions of men, which are uniform, than their customs, which are changeable, the varieties, which time or place can furnish, will be inconsiderable; and I shall endeavour to show, in the next paper, how little the latter ages have contributed to the improvement of the rustic muse.

No. 37.] Tuesday, July 24, 1750.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armenta vocabat,
Amphion Dircæus. VIRG.

Such strains I sing as once Amphion play'd
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.
ELPHINSTON.

In writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor critics of latter times seem to have paid sufficient regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficultics, by advancing principles, which having no foundation in the nature of things are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more distinct and exact idea of this kind of writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the pastorals of Virgil, from whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every advantage of nature and of fortune, concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment, enlightened with all the learning of one of the brightest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving, than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompense the want of novelty by exactness; that taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil, for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoever therefore may, according to the common course of things, happen in the country, may afford a subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occur to those who are versed in the writings of the modern critics, that there is no mention of the golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of a rural state to remote times, nor can I perceive that any writer has consistently preserved the Arcadian manners and sentiments. The only reason, that I have read, on which this rule has been founded, is, that, according to the custom of modern life, it is improbable that shepherds should be capable of harmonious numbers, or delicate sentiments; and therefore the reader must exalt his ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying his thoughts back to the age in which the care of herds and flocks was the employment of the wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led into their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not in general, as a representation of rural nature, and consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the country affords pleasure or employment, but simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actually tending sheep, and busied in the lowest and most laborious offices; from whence they very readily concluded, since characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the sentiments must sink to the level of the speakers, or the speakers must be raised to the height of the sentiments.

In consequence of these original errors, a thousand precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary manners of the golden age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in pastoral, than lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, among which are heard the gentle whispers of chaste fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous impatience. In pastoral, as in other writings, chastity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and purity of manners to be represented; not because the poet is confined to the images of the golden age, but because, having the subject in his own choice, he ought always to consult the interest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay down other principles, not very consistent with their general plan; for they tell us, that, to support the character of the shepherd, it is proper that all refinement should be avoided, and that some slight instances of ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil is supposed to have forgot the name of Anaximander, and in Pope the term Zodiac is too hard for a rustic apprehension. But if we place our shepherds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if

we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which, perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral by obsolete terms and rustic words, which they very learnedly call Doric, without reflecting that they thus became authors of a mangled dialect, which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personages, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity;

> Diggon Davie, I bid her good day;
> Or, Diggon her is, or I missay.
> *Dig.* Her was her while it was daylight,
> But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at the same time that a shepherd learns theology, he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil,

> *Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cautibus illum*
> *Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,*
> *Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.*

> I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
> And at the dugs of savage tigers fed;
> Alien of birth, usurper of the plains.—DRYDEN.

which Pope endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater impropriety:

> I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main
> More fierce than tigers on the Libyan plain
> Thou wert from Etna's burning entrails torn;
> Begot in tempests, and in thunders born!

Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature, are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because it wants that exaltation above common life, which in tragic or heroic writings often reconciles us to bold flights and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristic, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolic, though rejected by the critics; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because though the scene lies in the country, the song, being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction; for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus, the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem that the occasion which is supposed to produce it be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the more busy part of mankind. It is therefore improper to give the title of a pastoral to verses, in which the speakers, after the slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errors in the church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious person, whom, when once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer any labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep, and lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without art or learning, genius or study.

It is part of Claudian's character of his rustic, that he computes his time not by the succession of consuls, but of harvests. Those who pass their days in retreats distant from the theatres of business, are always least likely to hurry their imagination with public affairs.

The facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral style, has incited many writers, from whom more judgment might have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which the occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; and as one absurdity must naturally be expected to make way to another, they have written with an utter disregard both of life and nature, and filled their productions with mythological allusions, with incredible fictions and with sentiments which neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since the change which religion has made in the whole system of the world.

No. 38.] SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1750.

> *Auream quisquis mediocritatem*
> *Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti*
> *Sordibus tecti, caret invidenda*
> *Sobrius aula.* HOR.

> The man within the golden mean,
> Who can his boldest wish contain,
> Securely views the ruin'd cell,
> Where sordid want and sorrow dwell,
> And in himself serenely great,
> Declines an envied room of state. FRANCIS

AMONG many parallels which men of imagination have drawn between the natural and moral state of the world, it has been observed that happiness, as well as virtue, consists in mediocrity; that to avoid every extreme is necessary, even to him who has no other care than to pass through the present state with ease and safety; and that the middle path is the road of security, on either side of which are not only the pitfalls of vice, but the precipices of ruin.

Thus the maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, *μέτρον ἄριστον, mediocrity is best*, has been long considered as a universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature. The experience of every age seems to have given it new

confirmation, and to show that nothing, however specious or alluring, is pursued with propriety, or enjoyed with safety, beyond certain limits.

Even the gifts of nature, which may truly be considered as the most solid and durable of all terrestrial advantages, are found, when they exceed the middle point, to draw the possessor into many calamities, easily avoided by others that have been less bountifully enriched or adorned. We see every day women perish with infamy, by having been too willing to set their beauty to show; and others, though not with equal guilt or misery, yet with very sharp remorse, languishing in decay, neglect, and obscurity, for having rated their youthful charms at too high a price. And, indeed, if the opinion of Bacon be thought to deserve much regard, very few sighs would be vented for eminent and superlative elegance of form; "for beautiful women," says he, "are seldom of any great accomplishments, because they, for the most part, study behaviour rather than virtue."

Health and vigour, and a happy constitution of the corporeal frame, are of absolute necessity to the enjoyment of the comforts, and to the performance of the duties of life, and requisite in yet a greater measure to the accomplishment of any thing illustrious or distinguished; yet even these, if we can judge by their apparent consequences, are sometimes not very beneficial to those on whom they are most liberally bestowed. They that frequent the chambers of the sick will generally find the sharpest pains, and most stubborn maladies, among them whom confidence of the force of nature formerly betrayed to negligence and irregularity; and that superfluity of strength, which was at once their boast and their snare, has often, in the latter part of life, no other effect than that it continues them long in impotence and anguish.

These gifts of nature are, however, always blessings in themselves, and to be acknowledged with gratitude to him that gives them; since they are, in their regular and legitimate effects, productive of happiness, and prove pernicious only by voluntary corruption or idle negligence. And as there is little danger of pursuing them with too much ardour or anxiety, because no skill or diligence can hope to procure them, the uncertainty of their influence upon our lives is mentioned, not to depreciate their real value, but to repress the discontent and envy to which the want of them often gives occasion in those who do not enough suspect their own frailty, nor consider how much less is the calamity of not possessing great powers, than of not using them aright.

Of all those things that make us superior to others, there is none so much within the reach of our endeavours as riches, nor any thing more eagerly or constantly desired. Poverty is an evil always in our view, an evil complicated with so many circumstances of uneasiness and vexation, that every man is studious to avoid it. Some degree of riches is therefore required, that we may be exempt from the gripe of necessity; when this purpose is once attained, we naturally wish for more, that the evil which is regarded with so much horror, may be yet at a greater distance from us; as he that has once felt or dreaded the paw of a savage, will not be at rest till they are parted by some barrier, which may take away all possibility of a second attack.

To this point, if fear be not unreasonably indulged, Cleobulus would, perhaps, not refuse to extend his mediocrity. But it almost always happens, that the man who grows rich changes his notions of poverty, states his wants by some new measure, and from flying the enemy that pursued him, bends his endeavours to overtake those whom he sees before him. The power of gratifying his appetites increases their demands; a thousand wishes crowd in upon him, importunate to be satisfied, and vanity and ambition open prospects to desire, which still grow wider, as they are more contemplated.

Thus in time want is enlarged without bounds: an eagerness for increase of possessions deluges the soul, and we sink into the gulfs of insatiability; only because we do not sufficiently consider, that all real need is very soon supplied, and all real danger of its invasion easily precluded; that the claims of vanity, being without limits, must be denied at last: and that the pain of repressing them is less pungent before they have been long accustomed to compliance.

Whosoever shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches, will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue to obtain it. For all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune, is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason seldom remarked, which makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened, easily sinks into neglect of his affairs, and he that thinks he can afford to be negligent, is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities, which his inexperience will render unsurmountable; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed, and will be at last torn to pieces by the vultures that always hover over fortunes in decay.

When the plains of India were burnt up by a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Raschid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting round them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a being of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of Distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæa; "Fly not from your benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to offer you gifts, which only your own folly can make vain. You here pray for water, and water I will bestow; let me know with how much you will be satisfied: speak not rashly; consider, that of whatever can be enjoyed by the body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. When

you remember the pain of thirst, do not forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, tell me your request."

"O Being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, "let thine eye pardon my confusion. I entreat a little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, and in winter never overflow."—"It is granted," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet, scattered its rills over the meadows: the flowers renewed their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foliage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. "I request," says Raschid, "that thou wilt turn the Ganges through my grounds, with all his waters, and all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly repined in his heart, that he had not made the same petition before him; when the Genius spoke, "Rash man, be not so insatiable! remember, to thee that is nothing which thou canst not use; and how are thy wants greater than the wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The Genius then retired towards the river, and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the Ganges were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him.

No. 39.] Tuesday, July 31, 1750.

Infelix——nulli bene nupta marito.—AUSONIUS.

Unbless'd, still doom'd to wed with misery.

The condition of the female sex has been frequently the subject of compassion to medical writers, because their constitution of body is such, that every state of life brings its peculiar diseases; they are placed, according to the proverb, between Scylla and Charybdis, with no other choice than of dangers equally formidable; and whether they embrace marriage, or determine upon a single life, are exposed, in consequence of their choice, to sickness, misery, and death.

It were to be wished that so great a degree of natural infelicity might not be increased by adventitious and artificial miseries; and that beings, whose beauty we cannot behold without admiration, and whose delicacy we cannot contemplate without tenderness, might be suffered to enjoy every alleviation of their sorrows. But, however it has happened, the custom of the world seems to have been formed in a kind of conspiracy against them, though it does not appear but they had themselves an equal share in its establishment; and prescriptions which, by whomsoever they were begun, are now of long continuance, and by consequence of great authority, seem to have almost excluded them from content, in whatsoever condition they shall pass their lives.

If they refuse the society of men, and continue in that state which is reasonably supposed to place happiness most in their own power, they seldom give those that frequent their conversation any exalted notions of the blessing of liberty; for whether it be that they are angry to see with what inconsiderate eagerness other heedless females rush into slavery, or with what absurd vanity the married ladies boast the change of their condition, and condemn the heroines, who endeavour to assert the natural dignity of their sex; whether they are conscious that like barren countries they are free, only because they were never thought to deserve the trouble of a conquest, or imagine that their sincerity is not always unsuspected, when they declare their contempt of men; it is certain, that they generally appear to have some great and incessant cause of uneasiness, and that many of them have at last been persuaded by powerful rhetoricians, to try the life which they had so long contemned, and put on the bridal ornaments at a time when they least became them.

What are the real causes of the impatience which the ladies discover in a virgin state, I shall perhaps take some other occasion to examine. That it is not to be envied for its happiness, appears from the solicitude with which it is avoided; from the opinion universally prevalent among the sex, that no woman continues long in it but because she is not invited to forsake it; from the disposition always shown to treat old maids as the refuse of the world; and from the willingness with which it is often quitted at last, by those whose experience has enabled them to judge at leisure, and decide with authority.

Yet such is life, that whatever is proposed, it is much easier to find reasons for rejecting than embracing. Marriage, though a certain security from the reproach and solitude of antiquated virginity, has yet, as it is usually conducted, many disadvantages, that take away much from the pleasure which society promises, and might afford, if pleasures and pains were honestly shared, and mutual confidence inviolably preserved.

The miseries, indeed, which many ladies suffer under conjugal vexations, are to be considered with great pity, because their husbands are often not taken by them as objects of affection, but forced upon them by authority and violence, or by persuasion and importunity, equally resistless when urged by those whom they have been always accustomed to reverence and obey; and it very seldom appears that those who are thus despotic in the disposal of their children, pay any regard to their domestic and personal felicity, or think it so much to be inquired whether they will be happy, as whether they will be rich.

It may be urged, in extenuation of this crime, which parents, not in any other respect to be numbered with robbers and assassins, frequently commit, that in their estimation, riches and happiness are equivalent terms. They have passed their lives with no other wish than of adding acre to acre, and filling one bag after another, and imagine the advantage of a daughter sufficiently considered, when they have secured her a large jointure, and given her reasonable expectations of living in the midst of those pleasures with which she had seen her father and mother solacing their age.

There is an economical oracle received among

the prudential part of the world, which advises fathers *to marry their daughters, lest they should marry themselves;* by which I suppose it is implied, that women left to their own conduct generally unite themselves with such partners as can contribute very little to their felicity. Who was the author of this maxim, or with what intention it was originally uttered, I have not yet discovered; but imagine, that however solemnly it may be transmitted, or however implicitly received, it can confer no authority which nature has denied; it cannot license Titius to be unjust, lest Caia should be imprudent; nor give right to imprison for life, lest liberty should be ill employed.

That the ladies have sometimes incurred imputations which might naturally produce edicts not much in their favour, must be confessed by their warmest advocates; and I have indeed seldom observed, that when the tenderness or virtue of their parents has preserved them from forced marriage, and left them at large to choose their own path, in the labyrinth of life, they have made any great advantage of their liberty; they commonly take the opportunity of independence to trifle away youth and lose their bloom in a hurry of diversions, recurring in a succession too quick to leave room for any settled reflection; they see the world without gaining experience, and at last regulate their choice by motives trifling as those of a girl, or mercenary as those of a miser.

Melanthia came to town upon the death of her father, with a very large fortune, and with the reputation of a much larger; she was therefore followed and caressed by many men of rank, and by some of understanding; but having an insatiable desire of pleasure, she was not at leisure, from the park, the gardens, the theatres, visits, assemblies, and masquerades, to attend seriously to any proposal, but was still impatient for a new flatterer, and neglected marriage as always in her power; till in time her admirers fell away, wearied with expense, disgusted at her folly, or offended by her inconstancy; she heard of concerts to which she was not invited, and was more than once forced to sit still at an assembly for want of a partner. In this distress chance threw in her way Philotryphus, a man vain, glittering, and thoughtless as herself, who had spent a small fortune in equipage and dress, and was shining in the last suit for which his tailor would give him credit. He had been long endeavouring to retrieve his extravagance by marriage, and therefore soon paid his court to Melanthia, who, after some weeks of insensibility, saw him at a ball, and was wholly overcome by his performance in a minuet. They married; but a man cannot always dance, and Philotryphus had no other method of pleasing; however, as neither was in any great degree vicious, they lived together with no other unhappiness than vacuity of mind, and that tastelessness of life, which proceeds from a satiety of juvenile pleasures, and an utter inability to fill their place by nobler employments. As they have known the fashionable world at the same time, they agree in their notions of all those subjects on which they ever speak; and, being able to add nothing to the ideas of each other, are much inclined to conversation, but very often join in one wish, "That they could sleep more and think less."

Argyris, after having refused a thousand offers, at last consented to marry Cotylus, the younger brother of a duke, a man without elegance of mien, beauty of person, or force of understanding; who, while he courted her, could not always forbear allusions to her birth, and hints how cheaply she would purchase an alliance to so illustrious a family. His conduct from the hour of his marriage has been insufferably tyrannical, nor has he any other regard to her than what arises from his desire that her appearance may not disgrace him. Upon this principle, however, he always orders that she should be gayly dressed, and splendidly attended; and she has, among all her mortifications, the happiness to take place of her elder sister.

No. 40.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 4, 1750.

———Nec dicet, cur ego amicum
Offendam in nugis? Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel. HO

Nor say, for trifles why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove.
FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, that authors are *genus irritabile, a generation very easily put out of temper*, and that they seldom fail of giving proofs of their irascibility upon the slightest attack of criticism, or the most gentle or modest offer of advice and information.

Writers being best acquainted with one another, have represented this character as prevailing among men of literature, which a more extensive view of the world would have shown them to be diffused through all human nature, to mingle itself with every species of ambition and desire of praise, and to discover its effects with greater or less restraint, and under disguises more or less artful, in all places and all conditions.

The quarrels of writers, indeed, are more observed, because they necessarily appeal to the decision of the public. Their enmities are incited by applauses from their parties, and prolonged by treacherous encouragement for general diversion; and when the contest happens to rise high between men of genius and learning, its memory is continued for the same reason as its vehemence was at first promoted, because it gratifies the malevolence or curiosity of readers, and relieves the vacancies of life with amusement and laughter. The personal disputes, therefore, of rivals in wit are sometimes transmitted to posterity, when the grudges and heart-burnings of men less conspicuous, though carried on with equal bitterness, and productive of greater evils, are exposed to the knowledge of those only whom they nearly affect, and suffered to pass off and be forgotten among common and casual transactions.

The resentment which the discovery of a fault or folly produces, must bear a certain proportion to our pride, and will regularly be more acrimonious as pride is more immediately the principle of action. In whatever therefore we wish or imagine ourselves to excel, we shall always be displeased to have our claims to reputation disputed; and more displeased, if the accomplishment be such as can expect reputation only for

its reward. For this reason it is common to find men break out into rage at any insinuations to the disadvantage of their wit, who have borne with great patience reflections on their morals; and of women it has been always known, that no censures wound so deeply, or rankle so long, as that which charges them with want of beauty.

As men frequently fill their imaginations with trifling pursuits, and please themselves most with things of small importance, I have often known very severe and lasting malevolence excited by unlucky censures, which would have fallen without any effect, had they not happened to wound a part remarkably tender. Gustulus, who valued himself upon the nicety of his palate, disinherited his eldest son, for telling him that the wine, which he was then commending, was the same which he had sent away the day before not fit to be drunk. Proculus withdrew his kindness from a nephew, whom he had always considered as the most promising genius of the age, for happening to praise in his presence the graceful horsemanship of Marius. And Fortunio, when he was privy-counsellor, procured a clerk to be dismissed from one of the public offices, in which he was eminent for his skill and assiduity, because he had been heard to say that there was another man in the kingdom on whose skill at billiard's he would lay his money against Fortunio's.

Felicia and Floretta had been bred up in one house, and shared all the pleasures and endearments of infancy together. They entered upon life at the same time, and continued their confidence and friendship, consulted each other in every change of their dress, and every admission of a new lover; thought every diversion more entertaining whenever it happened that both were present, and when separated justified the conduct, and celebrated the excellencies, of one another. Such was their intimacy, and such their fidelity, till a birth-night approached, when Floretta took one morning an opportunity, as they were consulting upon new clothes, to advise her friend not to dance at the ball, and informed her that her performance the year before had not answered the expectation which her other accomplishments had raised. Felicia commended her sincerity, and thanked her for the caution; but told her that she danced to please herself, and was in very little concern what the men might take the liberty of saying, but that if her appearance gave her dear Floretta any uneasiness, she would stay away. Floretta had now nothing left but to make new protestations of sincerity and affection, with which Felicia was so well satisfied, that they parted with more than usual fondness. They still continued to visit, with this only difference, that Felicia was more punctual than before, and often declared how high a value she put upon sincerity, how much she thought that goodness to be esteemed which would venture to admonish a friend of an error, and with what gratitude advice was to be received, even when it might happen to proceed from mistake.

In a few months, Felicia, with great seriousness, told Floretta, that though her beauty was such as gave charms to whatever she did, and her qualifications so extensive, that she could not fail of excellence in any attempt, yet she thought herself obliged by the duties of friendship to inform her, that if ever she betrayed want of judgment, it was by too frequent complia ice with solicitations to sing, for that her manner was somewhat ungraceful, and her voice had no great compass. It is true, says Floretta, when I sung three nights ago at Lady Sprightly's I was hoarse with a cold; but I sing for my own satisfaction, and am not in the least pain whether I am liked. However, my dear Felicia's kindness is not the less, and I shall always think myself happy in so true a friend.

From this time they never saw each other without mutual professions of esteem, and declarations of confidence, but went soon after into the country to visit their relations. When they came back, they were prevailed on, by the importunity of new acquaintance, to take lodgings in different parts of the town, and had frequent occasion, when they met, to bewail the distance at which they were placed, and the uncertainty which each experienced of finding the other at home.

Thus are the fondest and firmest friendships dissolved, by such openness and sincerity as interrupt our enjoyment of our own approbation, or recall us to the remembrance of those failings which we are more willing to indulge than to correct.

It is by no means necessary to imagine, that he who is offended at advice, was ignorant of the fault, and resents the admonition as a false charge; for perhaps it is most natural to be enraged, when there is the strongest conviction of our own guilt. While we can easily defend our character, we are no more disturbed at an accusation, than we are alarmed by an enemy whom we are sure to conquer; and whose attack, therefore, will bring us honour without danger. But when a man feels the reprehension of a friend seconded by his own heart, he is easily heated into resentment and revenge, either because he hoped that the fault of which he was conscious had escaped the notice of others; or that his friend had looked upon it with tenderness and extenuation, and excused it for the sake of his other virtues; or had considered him as too wise to need advice, or too delicate to be shocked with reproach: or, because we cannot feel without pain those reflections roused which we have been endeavouring to lay asleep; and when pain has produced anger, who would not willingly believe, that it ought to be discharged on others, rather than on himself?

The resentment produced by sincerity, whatever be its immediate cause, is so certain, and generally so keen, that very few have magnanimity sufficient for the practice of a duty, which, above most others, exposes its votaries to hardships and persecution; yet friendship without it is of very little value, since the great use of so close an intimacy is, that our virtues may be guarded and encouraged, and our vices repressed in their first appearance by timely detection and salutary remonstrances.

It is decreed by Providence, that nothing truly valuable shall be obtained in our present state, but with difficulty and danger. He that hopes for that advantage which is to be gained from unrestrained communication, must sometimes hazard, by unpleasing truths, that friendship which he aspires to merit. The chief rule to be observed in the exercise of this dangerous office, is to preserve it pure from all mixture of interest or vanity; to forbear admonition or reproof, when

our consciences tell us that they are incited, not by the hopes of reforming faults, but the desire of showing our discernment, or gratifying our own pride by the mortification of another. It is not indeed certain, that the most refined caution will find a proper time for bringing a man to the knowledge of his own failings, or the most zealous benevolence reconcile him to that judgment, by which they are detected; but he who endeavours only the happiness of him whom he reproves, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend; and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

No. 41.] TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1750.

Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui. MART.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget;
They stretch the limits of this narrow span,
And, by enjoying, live past life again.—F. LEWIS.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superior and celestial nature of the soul of man. We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities, than the preservation of themselves, or their species requires; they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their bodies, with few other ideas than such as corporeal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young, proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and, after a short absence, if brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their conclusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct: and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that to distinguish them is *the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride*. To give an accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not completely understood, is impossible; we do not know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest, will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments compared with experiments; has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence; and exhibits the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which may be said to place us in the class of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures. Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by the effects which it leaves behind. The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are affected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us that we cannot take the whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves, riches, honours, and delights without intermingling those vexations and anxieties with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can generally soothe ourselves to tranquillity, whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful, to amuse them-

selves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past. For the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form: but the images which memory presents are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already existed, and left their signature behind them impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of razure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid, and are, indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once reposited, as Dryden expresses it, *in the sacred treasure of the past*, is out of the reach of accident, or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness, or another's malice:

——Non tamen irritum
Quodcunque retro est efficiet, neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.

Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
The joys I have possess'd, in spite of fate are mine.
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.
DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence, by such tokens as excite neither shame nor sorrow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered, to distinguish one day from another, is to him that has passed it as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified through its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horror and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect, which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence, be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited; and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it for ever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life, in which memory seems particularly to claim predominance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave it is more eminently true:

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years.
CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour: the changes which are to happen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore, to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expenses of that time, which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque,
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica canis.

Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here, suffering age, a bless'd provision find
ELPHINSTON

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune, and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness can be drawn only from recollection, and virtue will be all that we can recollect with pleasure.

No. 42.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1750.

Mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora.
HOR.

How heavily my time revolves along!
ELPHINSTON

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I AM no great admirer of grave writings, and therefore very frequently lay your papers aside before I have read them through; yet I cannot but confess that, by slow degrees, you have raised my opinion of your understanding; and that, though I believe it will be long before I can be prevailed upon to regard you with much kindness, you have, however, more of my esteem than those whom I sometimes make happy with opportunities to fill my tea-pot, or pick up my fan. I shall therefore choose you for the confidant of my distresses, and ask your counsel with regard to the means of conquering or escaping them, though I never expect from you any of that softness and pliancy, which constitutes the perfection of a companion for the ladies: as, in the place where I now am, I have recourse to the mastiff for protection, though I have no intention of making him a lap-dog.

My mamma is a very fine lady, who has more numerous and more frequent assemblies at her house than any other person in the same quarter of the town. I was bred from my earliest infancy in a perpetual tumult of pleasure, and remember to have heard of little else than messages, visits, play-houses, and balls; of the awkwardness of one woman, and the coquetry of another; the charming convenience of some rising fashion, the difficulty of playing a new game, the incidents of a masquerade, and the dresses of a court-night. I knew before I was ten years old all the rules of paying and receiving visits, and to how much civility every one of my acquaintance was entitled; and was able to return, with the proper degree of reserve or of vivacity, the stated and established answer to every compliment; so that I was very soon celebrated as a wit and a beauty, and had heard before I was

thirteen all that is ever said to a young lady. My mother was generous to so uncommon a degree as to be pleased with my advances into life, and allowed me without envy or reproof, to enjoy the same happiness with herself; though most women about her own age were very angry to see young girls so forward, and many fine gentlemen told her how cruel it was to throw new chains upon mankind, and to tyrannize over them at the same time with her own charms and those of her daughter.

I have now lived two and twenty years, and have passed of each year nine months in town, and three at Richmond; so that my time has been spent uniformly in the same company, and the same amusements, except as fashion has introduced new diversions, or the revolutions of the gay world have afforded new successions of wits and beaus. However, my mother is so good an economist of pleasure, that I have no spare hours upon my hands; for every morning brings some new appointment, and every night is hurried away by the necessity of making our appearance at different places, and of being with one lady at the opera, and with another at the card-table.

When the time came of settling our scheme of felicity for the summer, it was determined that I should pay a visit to a rich aunt in a remote county. As you know the chief conversation of all tea-tables, in the spring, arises from a communication of the manner in which time is to be passed till winter, it was a great relief to the barrenness of our topics, to relate the pleasures that were in store for me, to describe my uncle's seat, with the park and gardens, the charming walks and beautiful waterfalls; and every one told me how much she envied me, and what satisfaction she had once enjoyed in a situation of the same kind.

As we were all credulous in our own favour, and willing to imagine some latent satisfaction in any thing which we have not experienced, I will confess to you without restraint, that I had suffered my head to be filled with expectations of some nameless pleasure in a rural life, and that I hoped for the happy hour that should set me free from noise, and flutter, and ceremony, dismiss me to the peaceful shade, and lull me in content and tranquillity. To solace myself under the misery of delay, I sometimes heard a studious lady of my acquaintance read pastorals; I was delighted with scarce any talk but of leaving the town, and never went to bed without dreaming of groves, and meadows, and frisking lambs.

At length I had all my clothes in a trunk, and saw the coach at the door; I sprung in with ecstacy, quarrelled with my maid for being too long in taking leave of the other servants, and rejoiced as the ground grew less, which lay between me and the completion of my wishes. A few days brought me to a large old house, encompassed on three sides with woody hills, and looking from the front on a gentle river, the sight of which renewed all my expectations of pleasure, and gave me some regret for having lived so long without the enjoyment which these delightful scenes were now to afford me. My aunt came out to receive me, but in a dress so far removed from the present fashion, that I could scarcely look upon her without laughter, which would have been no kind requital for the trouble which she had taken to make herself fine against my arrival. The night and the next morning were driven along with inquiries about our family; my aunt then explained our pedigree, and told me stories of my great grandfather's bravery in the civil wars; nor was it less than three days before I could persuade her to leave me to myself.

At last economy prevailed; she went in the usual manner about her own affairs, and I was at liberty to range in the wilderness, and sit by the cascade. The novelty of the objects about me pleased me for a while, but after a few days they were new no longer, and I soon began to perceive that the country was not my element; that shades, and flowers, and lawns, and waters, had very soon exhausted all their power of pleasing, and that I had not in myself any fund of satisfaction, with which I could supply the loss of my customary amusements.

I unhappily told my aunt, in the first warmth of our embraces, that I had leave to stay with her ten weeks. Six only are yet gone, and how shall I live through the remaining four? I go out, and return; I pluck a flower, and throw it away; I catch an insect, and when I have examined its colours, set it at liberty; I fling a pebble into the water, and see one circle spread after another. When it chances to rain, I walk in the great hall, and watch the minute-hand upon the dial, or play with a litter of kittens, which the cat happens to have brought in a lucky time.

My aunt is afraid I shall grow melancholy, and therefore encourages the neighbouring gentry to visit us. They came at first with great eagerness to see the fine lady from London, but when we met we had no common topic on which we could converse, they had no curiosity after plays, operas, or music: and I find as little satisfaction from the accounts of the quarrels or alliances of families, whose names, when once I can escape, I shall never hear. The women have now seen me, know how my gown is made, and are satisfied; the men are generally afraid of me, and say little, because they think themselves not at liberty to talk rudely.

Thus I am condemned to solitude; the day moves slowly forward, and I see the dawn with uneasiness, because I consider that night is at a great distance. I have tried to sleep by a brook, but find its murmurs ineffectual: so that I am forced to be awake at least twelve hours, without visits, without cards, without laughter, and without flattery. I walk because I am disgusted with sitting still, and sit down because I am weary with walking. I have no motive to action, nor any object of love, or hate, or fear, or inclination. I cannot dress with spirit, for I have neither rival nor admirer; I cannot dance without a partner; nor be kind or cruel, without a lover.

Such is the life of Euphelia, and such it is likely to continue for a month to come. I have not yet declared against existence, nor called upon the Destinies to cut my thread; but I have sincerely resolved not to condemn myself to such another summer, nor too hastily to flatter myself with happiness. Yet I have heard, Mr. Rambler, of those who never thought themselves so much at ease as in solitude, and cannot but suspect it to be some way or other my own fault, that, without great pain, either of mind or body,

I am thus weary of myself: that the current of youth stagnates and that I am languishing in a dead calm, for want of some external impulse. I shall therefore think you a benefactor to our sex, if you will teach me the art of living alone; for I am confident that a thousand and a thousand and a thousand ladies, who affect to talk with ecstacies of the pleasures of the country, are in reality like me, longing for the winter, and wishing to be delivered from themselves by company and diversion.

I am, Sir, yours, EUPHELIA.

No. 43.] TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 1750.

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet acrius ire,
Sed tamen hæc brevis est, illa perennis aqua.
OVID.

In course impetuous soon the torrent dries,
The brook a constant peaceful stream supplies.
F. LEWIS.

IT is observed by those who have written on the constitution of the human body, and the original of those diseases by which it is afflicted, that every man comes into the world morbid, that there is no temperature so exactly regulated but that some humour is fatally predominant, and that we are generally impregnated, in our first entrance upon life, with the seeds of that malady, which, in time, shall bring us to the grave.

This remark has been extended by others to the intellectual faculties. Some that imagine themselves to have looked with more than common penetration into human nature, have endeavoured to persuade us that each man is born with a mind formed peculiarly for certain purposes, and with desires unalterably determined to particular objects, from which the attention cannot be long diverted, and which alone, as they are well or ill pursued, must produce the praise or blame, the happiness or misery of his future life.

This position has not, indeed, been hitherto proved with strength proportionate to the assurance with which it has been advanced, and perhaps will never gain much prevalence by a close examination.

If the doctrine of innate ideas be itself disputable, there seems to be little hope of establishing an opinion, which supposes that even complications of ideas have been given us at our birth, and that we are made by nature ambitious, or covetous, before we know the meaning of either power or money.

Yet as every step in the progression of existence changes our position with respect to the things about us, so as to lay us open to new assaults and particular dangers, and subjects us to inconveniences from which any other situation is exempt; as a public or a private life, youth and age, wealth and poverty, have all some evil closely adherent, which cannot wholly be escaped but by quitting the state to which it is annexed, and submitting to the incumbrances of some other condition; so it cannot be denied that every difference in the structure of the mind has its advantages and its wants; and that failures and defects being inseparable from humanity, however the powers of understanding be extended or contracted, there will on one side or the other always be an avenue to error and miscarriage.

There seem to be some souls suited to great, and others to little employments: some formed to soar aloft, and take in wide views, and others to grovel on the ground, and confine their regard to a narrow sphere. Of these the one is always in danger of becoming useless by a daring negligence, the other by a scrupulous solicitude; the one collects many ideas, but confused and indistinct; the other is busied in minute accuracy, but without compass and without dignity.

The general error of those who possess powerful and elevated understandings, is, that they form schemes of too great extent, and flatter themselves too hastily with success; they feel their own force to be great, and by the complacency with which every man surveys himself, imagine it still greater: they therefore look out for undertakings worthy of their abilities, and engage in them with very little precaution, for they imagine that without premeditated measures, they shall be able to find expedients in all difficulties. They are naturally apt to consider all prudential maxims as below their regard, to treat with contempt those securities and resources which others know themselves obliged to provide, and disdain to accomplish their purposes by established means, and common gradations.

Precipitation, thus incited by the pride of intellectual superiority, is very fatal to great designs. The resolution of the combat is seldom equal to the vehemence of the charge. He that meets with an opposition which he did not expect, loses his courage. The violence of his first onset is succeeded by a lasting and unconquerable languor; miscarriage makes him fearful of giving way to new hopes; and the contemplation of an attempt in which he has fallen below his own expectations is painful and vexatious; he therefore naturally turns his attention to more pleasing objects, and habituates his imagination to other entertainments, till, by slow degrees, he quits his first pursuit, and suffers some other project to take possession of his thoughts, in which the same ardour of mind promises him again certain success, and which disappointments of the same kind compel him to abandon.

Thus too much vigour in the beginning of an undertaking often intercepts and prevents the steadiness and perseverance always necessary in the conduct of a complicated scheme, where many interests are to be connected, many movements to be adjusted, and the joint effort of distinct and independent powers to be directed to a single point. In all important events which have been suddenly brought to pass, chance has been the agent rather than reason; and therefore, however those who seemed to preside in the transaction, may have been celebrated by such as loved or feared them, succeeding times have commonly considered them as fortunate rather than prudent. Every design in which the connexion is regularly traced from the first motion to the last, must be formed and executed by calm intrepidity, and requires not only courage which danger cannot turn aside, but constancy which fatigues cannot weary, and contrivance which impediments cannot exhaust.

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance; it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man

was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pick-axe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten roads of life, and acquiring a reputation superior to names hourly swept away by time among the refuse of fame, should add to their reason, and their spirit, the power of persisting in their purposes; acquire the art of sapping what they cannot batter, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by obstinate attacks.

The student who would build his knowledge on solid foundations, and proceed by just degrees to the pinnacles of truth, is directed by the great philosopher of France to begin by doubting of his own existence. In like manner, whoever would complete any arduous and intricate enterprise, should, as soon as his imagination can cool after the first blaze of hope, place before his own eyes every possible embarrassment that may retard or defeat him. He should first question the probability of success, and then endeavour to remove the objections that he has raised. It is proper, says old Markham,* to exercise your horse on the more inconvenient side of the course, that if he should, in the race, be forced upon it, he may not be discouraged; and Horace advises his poetical friend to consider every day as the last which he shall enjoy, because that will always give pleasure which we receive beyond our hopes. If we alarm ourselves beforehand with more difficulties than we really find, we shall be animated by unexpected facility with double spirit; and if we find our cautions and fears justified by the consequence, there will however happen nothing against which provision has not been made, no sudden shock will be received, nor will the main scheme be disconcerted.

There is, indeed, some danger lest he that too scrupulously balances probabilities, and too perspicaciously foresees obstacles, should remain always in a state of inaction, without venturing upon attempts on which he may perhaps spend his labour without advantage. But previous despondence is not the fault of those for whom this essay is designed; they who require to be warned against precipitation, will not suffer more fear to intrude into their contemplations than is necessary to allay the effervescence of an agitated fancy. As Des Cartes has kindly shown how a man may prove to himself his own existence, if once he can be prevailed upon to question it, so the ardent and adventurous will not be long without finding some plausible extenuation of the greatest difficulties. Such, indeed, is the uncertainty of all human affairs, that security and despair are equal follies; and as it is presumption and arroganee to anticipate triumphs, it is weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages. The numbers that have been stopped in their career of happiness are sufficient to show the uncertainty of human foresight; but there are not wanting contrary instances of such success obtained against all appearances, as may warrant the boldest flights of genius, if they are supported by unshaken perseverance.

* Gervase Markham, in his book entitled "Perfect Horsemanship," 12mo. 1671. He was a dramatic poet, and a voluminous writer, on various subjects.

No. 44.] Saturday, August 18, 1750.

Ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστι. HOMER.

———Dreams descend from Jove. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

I had lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it as follows:

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted in attending to a lively conversation, when on a sudden I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame advancing towards me. She was dressed in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles, her eyes deep sunk in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terror and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown, and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed, and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and thorns, into a deep solitary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest, from every baleful tree the night raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horror. In the midst of this tremendous scene my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner:

"Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, from the vain allurements of a deceitful world, and learn that pleasure was not designed the portion of human life. Man was born to mourn and to be wretched; this is the condition of all below the stars, and whoever endeavours to oppose it, acts in contradiction to the will of Heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments of youth and social delight, and here consecrate the solitary hours to lamentation and wo. Misery is the duty of all sublunary beings, and every enjoyment is an offence to the Deity, who is to be worshipped only by the mortification of every sense of pleasure, and the everlasting exercise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yew, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched. In this sad situation I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waves rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here

I determined to plunge, and was just upon the brink, when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form: effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendours were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach the frightful spectre, who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrors she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beauteous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions:

"My name is Religion. I am the offspring of Truth and Love, and the parent of Benevolence, Hope, and Joy. That monster from whose power I have freed you is called Superstition, she is the child of Discontent, and her followers are Fear and Sorrow. Thus different as we are, she has often the insolence to assume my name and character, and seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same, till she at length drives them to the borders of despair, that dreadful abyss into which you were just going to sink.

"Look round and survey the various beauties of the globe, which Heaven has destined for the seat of the human race, and consider whether a world thus exquisitely framed could be meant for the abode of misery and pain. For what end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused such innumerable objects of delight, but that all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent Author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he has sent, is virtue and obedience; and to reject them, merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite goodness is the source of created existence; the proper tendency of every rational being, from the highest order of raptured seraphs, to the meanest rank of men, is to rise incessantly from lower degrees of happiness to higher. They have each faculties assigned them for various orders of delights."

"What," cried I, "is this the language of Religion? Does she lead her votaries through flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the mortifications of penitence, the self-denying exercises of saints and heroes?"

"The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, "do not consist in unbounded indulgence, or luxurious ease, in the tumult of passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter of light amusements. Yielding to immoral pleasure corrupts the mind, living to animal and trifling ones debases it: both in their degree disqualify it for its genuine good, and consign it over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really happy, must make the diligent and regular exercise of his superior powers his chief attention, adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing good will to his fellow creatures, cultivating inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he must allow such gratifications as will, by refreshing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the regions inhabited by angelic natures, unmingled felicity for ever blooms, joy flows there with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor needs there any mound to check its course. Beings conscious of a frame of mind originally diseased, as all the human race has cause to be, must use the regimen of a stricter self-government. Whoever has been guilty of voluntary excesses must patiently submit both to the painful workings of nature, and needful severities of medicine, in order to his cure. Still he is entitled to a moderate share of whatever alleviating accommodations this fair mansion of his merciful Parent affords, consistent with his recovery. And in proportion as this recovery advances, the liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of an amended and improving heart. So far from the horrors of despair is the condition even of the guilty. Shudder, poor mortal, at the thought of the gulf into which thou wast but now going to plunge.

"While the most faulty have ever encouragement to amend, the more innocent soul will be supported with still sweeter consolations under all its experience of human infirmities; supported by the gladdening assurances that every sincere endeavour to outgrow them shall be assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a one the lowliest self-abasement is but a deep-laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; since they who faithfully examine and acknowledge what they are, shall be enabled under my conduct to become what they desire. The Christian and the hero are inseparable; and to aspirings of unassuming trust, and filial confidence, are set no bounds. To him who is animated with a view of obtaining approbation from the Sovereign of the universe, no difficulty is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of every needful aid, his conflict with the severest pains and trials, is little more than the vigorous exercise of a mind in health. His patient dependence on that Providence which looks through all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready accommodation of his thoughts and behaviour to its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excellent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most exalted transports. Society is the true sphere of human virtue. In social, active life, difficulties will perpetually be met with; restraints of many kinds will be necessary; and studying to behave right in respect of these is a discipline of the human heart, useful to others, and improving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but where it is necessary to avoid guilt, or to do good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or lessens the generous activity of virtue. The happiness allotted to man in his present state, is indeed faint and low, compared with his immortal prospects and noble capacities; but yet whatever portion of it the distributing hand of Heaven offers to each individual, is a needful support and refreshment for the present moment, so far as it may not hinder the attaining of his final destination.

"Return then with me from continual misery to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. Return from the contracted views of solitude to the proper duties of a relative and dependent being. Religion is not confined to cells and closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement. These are the gloomy doctrines of Superstition, by which she endeavours to break those chains of benevolence and social affection, that link the welfare of every

particular with that of the whole. Remember that the greatest honour you can pay to the Author of your being is by such a cheerful behaviour, as discovers a mind satisfied with his dispensations."

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village, and a new rising sun darting his beams through my windows, awaked me.*

I am yours, &c.

No. 45.] Tuesday, August 21, 1750.

Ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,
Ὅταν γύνη πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ,
Νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα.—— EURIP.

This is the chief felicity of life,
That concord smiles on the connubial bed;
But now 'tis hatred all.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Though, in the dissertations which you have given us on marriage, very just cautions are laid down against the common causes of infelicity and the necessity of having, in that important choice, the first regard to virtue, is carefully inculcated; yet I cannot think the subject so much exhausted, but that a little reflection would present to the mind many questions, in the discussion of which great numbers are interested, and many precepts which deserve to be more particularly and forcibly impressed.

You seem, like most of the writers that have gone before you, to have allowed as an uncontested principle, that *marriage is generally unhappy:* but I know not whether a man, who professes to think for himself, and concludes from his own observations, does not depart from his character when he follows the crowd thus implicitly, and receives maxims without recalling them to a new examination, especially when they comprise so wide a circuit of life, and include such variety of circumstances. As I have an equal right with others to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried, than many who talk of it without experience, I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy; and that most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their nature would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

It is, indeed, common to hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered, that the days which they so much wish to call back, are the days not only of celibacy, but of youth, the days of novelty and improvement, of ardour and of hope, of health and vigour of body, of gayety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful; and I am afraid that whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous, the longer it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indiscretion of their choice, is not a sufficient proof that they have chosen ill, since we see the same discontent at every other part of life which we cannot change. Converse with almost any man, grown old in a profession, and you will find him regretting that he did not enter into some different course, to which he too late finds his genius better adapted, or in which he discovers that wealth and honour are more easily attained. "The merchant," says Horace, "envies the soldier, and the soldier recounts the felicity of the merchant; the lawyer, when his clients harass him, calls out for the quiet of the countryman; and the countryman, when business calls him to town, proclaims that there is no happiness but amidst opulence, and crowds." Every man recounts the inconveniences of his own station, and thinks those of any other less, because he has not felt them. Thus the married praise the ease and freedom of a single state, and the single fly to marriage from the weariness of solitude. From all our observations we may collect with certainty, that misery is the lot of man, but cannot discover in what particular condition it will find most alleviations; or whether all external appendages are not, as we use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes for ease from change of posture; he changes it, and finds himself equally tormented: and of the same kind are the expedients by which we endeavour to obviate or elude those uneasinesses, to which mortality will always be subject. It is not likely that the married state is eminently miserable, since we see such numbers, whom the death of their partners has set free from it, entering it again.

Wives and husbands are, indeed, incessantly complaining of each other; and there would be reason for imagining that almost every house was infested with perverseness or oppression beyond human sufferance, did we not know upon how small occasions some minds burst out into lamentations and reproaches, and how naturally every animal revenges his pain upon those who happen to be near, without any nice examination of its cause. We are always willing to fancy ourselves within a little of happiness, and when, with repeated efforts, we cannot reach it, persuade ourselves that it is intercepted by an ill-paired mate, since, if we could find any other obstacle, it would be our own fault that it was not removed.

Anatomists have often remarked that though our diseases are sufficiently numerous and severe, yet when we inquire into the structure of the body, the tenderness of some parts, the minuteness of others, and the immense multiplicity of animal functions that must concur to the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our powers, there appears reason to wonder rather that we are preserved so long, than that we perish so soon, and that our frame subsists for a single day, or hour,

* This paper, and No. 100, were written by the late Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, of Deal in Kent, who died February 19, 1806.—C.

without disorder, rather than that it should be broken or obstructed by violence of accidents or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon observation of the manner in which marriage is frequently contracted. When I see the avaricious and crafty taking companions to their tables and their beds without any inquiry, but after farms and money; or the giddy and thoughtless uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers at a ball; when parents make articles for their children, without inquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their brothers, and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they have found themselves rejected where they were more solicitous to please; when some marry because their servants cheat them, some because they squander their own money, some because their houses are pestered with company, some because they will live like other people, and some only because they are sick of themselves, I am not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude that society has something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when I find its pleasures so great, that even the ill choice of a companion can hardly overbalance them.

By the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the men and women never saw each other till they were joined beyond the power of parting. It may be suspected that by this method many unsuitable matches were produced, and many tempers associated that were not qualified to give pleasure to each other. Yet perhaps, among a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications, and the uniformity of life, gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike; and while they felt neither cold nor hunger, they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us whom knowledge has made nice, and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cautions requisite to secure tranquillity; and yet if we observe the manner in which those converse, who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall, perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavour of both parties, during the times of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known, and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continual affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask, and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterward with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding night, and that, by a strange imposture, one has been courted, and another married.

I desire you, therefore, Mr. Rambler, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behaviour in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment.

I am, &c.

L

No. 46.] SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 1750.

——*Genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,*
Vix ea nostra voco OVID

Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim;
All is my own, my honour and my shame

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

SINCE I find that you have paid so much regard to my complaints as to publish them, I am inclined by vanity, or gratitude, to continue our correspondence; and, indeed, without either of these motives, am glad of an opportunity to write, for I am not accustomed to keep in any thing that swells my heart, and have here none with whom I can freely converse. While I am thus employed, some tedious hours will slip away, and when I return to watch the clock, I shall find that I have disburdened myself of part of the day.

You perceive that I do not pretend to write with much consideration of any thing but my own convenience; and, not to conceal from you my real sentiments, the little time which I have spent, against my will, in solitary meditation, has not much contributed to my veneration for authors, I have now sufficient reason to suspect, that, with all your splendid professions of wisdom, and seeming regard for truth, you have very little sincerity; that you either write what you do not think, and willingly impose upon mankind, or that you take no care to think right, but while you set up yourselves as guides, mislead your followers by credulity or negligence; that you produce to the public whatever notions you can speciously maintain, or elegantly express, without inquiring whether they are just, and transcribe hereditary falsehoods from old authors perhaps as ignorant and careless as yourselves.

You may perhaps wonder that I express myself with so much acrimony on a question in which women are supposed to have very little interest; and you are likely enough, for I have seen many instances of the sauciness of scholars, to tell me, that I am more properly employed in playing with my kittens, than in giving myself airs of criticism, and censuring the learned. But you are mistaken, if you imagine that I am to be intimidated by your contempt, or silenced by your reproofs. As I read, I have a right to judge; as I am injured, I have a right to complain; and these privileges, which I have purchased at so dear a rate, I shall not easily be persuaded to resign.

To read has, indeed, never been my business, but as there are hours of leisure in the most active life, I have passed the superfluities of time, which the diversions of the town left upon my hands, in turning over a large collection of tragedies and romances, where, amongst other sentiments, common to all authors of this class, I have found almost every page filled with the charms and happiness of a country life: that life to which every statesman in the highest elevation of his prosperity is contriving to retire; that life to which every tragic heroine in some scene or other wishes to have been born, and which is represented as a certain refuge from

folly, from anxiety, from passion, and from guilt.

It was impossible to read so many passionate exclamations, and soothing descriptions, without feeling some desire to enjoy the state in which all this felicity was to be enjoyed; and therefore I received with raptures the invitation of my good aunt, and expected that by some unknown influence I should find all hopes and fears, jealousies and competitions, vanish from my heart upon my first arrival at the seats of innocence and tranquillity; that I should sleep in halcyon bowers, and wander in elysian gardens, where I should meet with nothing but softness of benevolence, the candour of simplicity, and the cheerfulness of content; where I should see reason exerting her sovereignty over life, without any interruption from envy, avarice, or ambition, and every day passing in such a manner as the severest wisdom should approve.

This, Mr. Rambler, I tell you I expected, and this I had by a hundred authors been taught to expect. By this expectation I was led hither, and here I live in perpetual uneasiness, without any other comfort than that of hoping to return to London.

Having, since I wrote my former letter, been driven, by the mere necessity of escaping from absolute inactivity, to make myself more acquainted with the affairs and inhabitants of this place, I am now no longer an absolute stranger to rural conversation and employments, but am far from discovering in them more innocence or wisdom, than in the sentiments or conduct of those with whom I have passed more cheerful and more fashionable hours.

It is common to reproach the tea-table, and the park, with giving opportunities and encouragement to scandal. I cannot wholly clear them from the charge; but must, however, observe, in favour of the modish prattlers, that, if not by principle, we are at least by accident less guilty of defamation than the country ladies. For having greater numbers to observe and censure, we are commonly content to charge them only with their own faults or follies, and seldom give way to malevolence, but such as arises from some injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered to ourselves. But in these distant provinces, where the same families inhabit the same houses from age to age, they transmit and recount the faults of a whole succession. I have been informed how every estate in the neighbourhood was originally got, and find, if I may credit the accounts given me, that there is not a single acre in the hands of the right owner. I have been told of intrigues between beaux, and toasts that have been now three centuries in their quiet graves, and am often entertained with traditional scandal on persons of whose names there would have been no remembrance, had they not committed somewhat that might disgrace their descendants.

In one of my visits I happened to commend the air and dignity of a young lady, who had just left the company; upon which two grave matrons looked with great slyness at each other, and the elder asked me whether I had ever seen the picture of Henry the Eighth. You may imagine that I did not immediately perceive the propriety of the question: but after having waited a while for information, I was told that the lady's grandmother had a great-great-grandmother that was an attendant on Anna Bullen, and supposed to have been too much a favourite of the king.

If once there happens a quarrel between the principal persons of two families, the malignity is continued without end, and it is common for old maids to fall out about some election, in which their grandfathers were competitors; the heart-burnings of the civil war are not yet extinguished; there are two families in the neighbourhood who have destroyed each other's game from the time of Philip and Mary; and when an account came of an inundation, which had injured the plantations of a worthy gentleman, one of the hearers remarked, with exultation, that he might now have some notion, of the ravages committed by his ancestors in their retreat from Bosworth.

Thus malice and hatred descend here with an inheritance, and it is necessary to be well versed in history, that the various factions of this country may be understood. You cannot expect to be on good terms with families who are resolved to love nothing in common; and, in selecting your intimates, you are perhaps to consider which party you most favour in the barons' wars. I have often lost the good opinion of my aunt's visitants by confounding the interests of York and Lancaster, and was once censured for sitting silent when William Rufus was called a tyrant. I have, however, now thrown aside all pretences to circumspection, for I find it impossible in less than seven years to learn all the requisite cautions. At London, if you know your company, and their parents, you are safe; but you are here suspected of alluding to the slips of great-grandmothers, and of reviving contests which were decided in armour by the redoubted knights of ancient times. I hope therefore that you will not condemn my impatience, if I am weary of attending where nothing can be learned, and of quarrelling where there is nothing to contest, and that you will contribute to divert me while I stay here by some facetious performance.

I am, Sir,

EUPHELIA.

No. 47.] TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1750.

Quanquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor et frangor eadem illa humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum permitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen clim durior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus nihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi magnos homines et sapientes videri. Qui an magni sapientesque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hominis est enim affici dolore, sentire: resistere tamen, et solatia admittere; non solatiis non egere. PLIN.

These proceedings have afforded me some comfort in my distress; notwithstanding which, I am still dispirited and unhinged by the same motives of humanity that induced me to grant such indulgences. However, I by no means wish to become less suseeptible of tenderness. I know these kind of misfortunes would be estimated by other persons only as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief, to feel sorrow, at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort.—*Earl of Orrery.*

OF the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally

hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress; and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of happiness really existing, and generally within the prospect. The miser always imagines that there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like King Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gayety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain and knows the medicine, to which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it requires what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or error which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement; the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it. Sorrow is properly that state of the mind in which our desires are fixed upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief caused by the dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestic union.

It seems determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable, as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable, as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice; it may afterwards be admitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice, to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterward to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gayety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity; and therefore many, who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness, no warmth of benevolence, nor any of those honest joys which nature annexes to the power of pleasing. And as no man can justly claim more tenderness than he pays, he must forfeit his share in that officious and watchful kindness which love only can dictate, and those lenient endearments by which love only can soften life. He may justly be overlooked and neglected by such as have more warmth in their heart; for who would be the friend of him, whom, with whatever assiduity he may be courted, and with whatever services obliged, his principles will not suffer to make equal returns, and who, when you have exhausted all the instances of good-will, can only be prevailed on not to be an enemy?

An attempt to preserve life in a state of neutrality and indifference, is unreasonable and vain. If by excluding joy we could shut out grief, the scheme would deserve very serious attention; but since, however we may debar ourselves from happiness, misery will find its way at many inlets, and the assaults of pain will force our regard, though we may withhold it from the invitations of pleasure, we may surely endeavour to raise life above the middle point of apathy at one time, since it will necessarily sink below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not to gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it must be con-

fessed, that in proportion to the pleasure of possession, will be for some time our sorrow for the loss; it is therefore the province of the moralist to inquire whether such pains may not quickly give way to mitigation. Some have thought that the most certain way to clear the heart from its embarrassment is to drag it by force into scenes of merriment. Others imagine, that such a transition is too violent, and recommend rather to soothe it into tranquillity, by making it acquainted with miseries more dreadful and afflictive, and diverting to the calamities of others the regard which we are inclined to fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those remedies will be sufficiently powerful. The efficacy of mirth it is not always easy to try, and the indulgence of melancholy may be suspected to be one of those medicines, which will destroy, if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorrow is employment. It is commonly observed, that among soldiers and seamen, though there is much kindness, there is little grief; they see their friend fall without any of that lamentation which is indulged in security and idleness, because they have no leisure to spare from the care of themselves; and whoever shall keep his thoughts equally busy, will find himself equally unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sorrow, and its effects might doubtless be accelerated by quickening the succession, and enlarging the variety of objects.

——*Si tempore longo*
Leniri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari,
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit.—— GROTIUS.

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief.
F. LEWIS.

Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied by exercise and motion.

No. 48.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 1, 1750.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita. MART.

For life is not to live, but to be well.
ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the innumerable follies, by which we lay up in our youth repentance and remorse for the succeeding part of our lives, there is scarce any against which warnings are of less efficacy than the neglect of health. When the springs of motion are yet elastic, when the heart bounds with vigour, and the eye sparkles with spirit, it is with difficulty that we are taught to conceive the imbecility that every hour is bringing upon us, or to imagine that the nerves which are now braced with so much strength, and the limbs which play with so much activity, will lose all their power under the gripe of time, relax with numbness, and totter with debility.

To the arguments which have been used against complaints under the miseries of life, the philosophers have, I think, forgot to add the incredulity of those to whom we account our sufferings. But if the purpose of lamentation be to excite pity, it is surely superfluous for age and weakness to tell their plaintive stories; for pity presupposes sympathy, and a little attention will show them, that those who do not feel pain, seldom think that it is felt; and a short recollection will inform almost every man, that he is only repaid the insult which he has given, since he may remember how often he has mocked infirmity, laughed at its cautions, and censured its impatience.

The valetudinarian race have made the care of health ridiculous by suffering it to prevail over all other considerations, as the miser has brought frugality into contempt, by permitting the love of money not to share, but to engross, his mind: they both err alike, by confounding the means with the end; they grasp at health only to be well, as at money only to be rich; and forget that every terrestrial advantage is chiefly valuable as it furnishes abilities for the exercise of virtue.

Health is indeed so necessary to all the duties, as well as pleasures, of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to the folly; and he that for a short gratification brings weakness and diseases upon himself, and for the pleasure of a few years passed in the tumults of diversion and clamours of merriment, condemns the maturer and more experienced part of his life to the chamber and the couch, may be justly reproached, not only as a spendthrift of his own happiness, but as a robber of the public; as a wretch that has voluntarily disqualified himself for the business of his station, and refused that part which Providence assigns him in the general task of human nature.

There are perhaps very few conditions more to be pitied than that of an active and elevated mind, labouring under the weight of a distempered body. The time of such a man is always spent in forming schemes, which a change of wind hinders him from executing, his powers fume away in projects and in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thoughts of to-morrow, pleases his ambition with the fame he shall acquire, or his benevolence with the good he shall confer. But in the night the skies are overcast, the temper of the air is changed, he wakes in languor, impatience and distraction, and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but to misery. It may be said that disease generally begins that equality which death completes; the distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay, or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing left him but the consciousness of innocence.

There is among the fragments of the Greek poets a short hymn to Health, in which her power of exalting the happiness of life, of heightening the gifts of fortune, and adding enjoyment to possession, is inculcated with so much force and beauty, that no one, who has ever languished under the discomforts and infirmities of a lingering disease, can read it without feeling the ima

ges dance in his heart, and adding from his own experience new vigour to the wish, and from his own imagination new colours to the picture. The particular occasion of this little composition is not known, but it is probable that the author had been sick, and in the first raptures of returning vigour addressed Health in the following manner:

Ὑγίεια πρεσβίστα Μακάρων,
Μετὰ σοῦ ναίοιμι
Τὸ λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς
Σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων σύνοικος εἶηι.
Εἰ γάρ τις ἢ πλοῦτου χάρις ἢ τεκέων,
Τᾶς εὐδαιμονός τ' ἀνθρώποις
Βασιληίδος ἀρχᾶς, ἢ πόθων,
Οὺς κρυφίοις Ἀφροδίτης ἄρκυσιν θηρεύομεν,
Ἢ εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποις τέρψις,
Ἢ πόνων ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται·
Μετὰ σεῖο, μάκαιρα ὐγίεια,
Τέθηλε πάντα, καὶ λάμπει χαρίτων ἔαρ·
Σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς, οὐδεὶς, εὐδαίμων πέλει·

"Health, most venerable of the powers of heaven! with thee may the remaining part of my life be passed, nor do thou refuse to bless me with thy residence. For whatever there is of beauty or of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of human desire which we endeavour to chase into the toils of love; whatever delight, or whatever solace is granted by the celestials, to soften our fatigues, in thy presence. thou parent of happiness, all those joys spread out and flourish; in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, and without thee no man is happy."

Such is the power of health, that without its co-operation every other comfort is torpid and lifeless, as the powers of vegetation without the sun. And yet this bliss is commonly thrown away in thoughtless negligence, or in foolish experiments on our own strength; we let it perish without remembering its value, or waste it to show how much we have to spare; it is sometimes given up to the management of levity and chance, and sometimes sold for the applause of jollity and debauchery.

Health is equally neglected, and with equal impropriety, by the votaries of business and the followers of pleasure. Some men ruin the fabric of their bodies by incessant revels, and others by intemperate studies; some batter it by excess, and others sap it by inactivity. To the noisy rout of bacchanalian rioters, it will be to little purpose that advice is offered, though it requires no great abilities to prove, that he loses pleasure who loses health; their clamours are too loud for the whispers of caution, and they run the course of life with too much precipitance to stop at the call of wisdom. Nor perhaps will they that are busied in adding thousands to thousands, pay much regard to him that shall direct them to hasten more slowly to their wishes. Yet since lovers of money are generally cool, deliberate and thoughtful, they might surely consider, that the greater good ought not to be sacrificed to the less. Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured; but thousands and millions, are of small avail to alleviate the protracted tortures of the gout, to repair the broken organs of sense, or resuscitate the powers of digestion. Poverty is, indeed, an evil from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to another, nor take shelter in the arms of sickness.

Projecere animam! quam vellent æthere in alto
Nunc et pauperiem, et duros perferre labores!
VIRG.

For healthful indigence in vain they pray,
In quest of wealth who throw their lives away

Those who lose their health in an irregular and impetuous pursuit of literary accomplishments are yet less to be excused; for they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced. Whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury; and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed must give up years to the listlessness of languor, and the implacability of pain. They whose endeavour is mental excellence, will learn, perhaps too late, how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude.

No. 49.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 4, 1750.

Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam, usque ego postera
Crescam laude recens. HOR.

Whole Horace shall not die; his songs shall save
The greatest portion from the greedy grave.
CREECH.

THE first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly: but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terror in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient

to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason, new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations, whose artless and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a village, than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of those adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned: some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some, as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus widely put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that, during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by Heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as co-operating with future ages, and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished.

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather than extinguished; and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferior and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompense which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyric can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drank many a flagon, and uttered many a reproach.*

Πολλὰ φαγὼν, καὶ πολλὰ πιὼν, καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπων
Ἀνθρώπους, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων ὑΡόδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

No. 50.] Saturday, Sept. 8, 1750.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat; et si
Barbato cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret
Plura domi fraga, et majores glandis acervos.
JUV.

And had not men the hoary head revered,
And boys paid reverence when a man appear'd
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acorns in their store.
CREECH.

I have always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend the virtues as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries, and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who can once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undistinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice, till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shown; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion and supported rather by willingness to credit, than ability to prove them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time, to censure the new comers into life, for want of respect to gray hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels, which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated, by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age, which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he assumes who dares to claim the privilege of complaining; for as every man has, in his own opinion, a full share of the miseries of life, he is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness as a proof of impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, What merit has this man to show, by which he has acquired a right to repine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imagine that exemptions should be granted him from the general condition of man? We find ourselves excited rather to captiousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to soothe his complaints by sympathy and tenderness, we inquire, whether the pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, supposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and folly, rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so often to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to inquiries like these. For surely it will be thought at the first view of things, that if age be thus contemned and ridiculed, insulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on either part. They who have had opportunities of establishing their authority over minds ductile and unresisting, they who have been the protectors of helplessness, and the instructors of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the power of wealth, and the dignity of command, must defeat their influence by their own misconduct, and make use of all these advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure to themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open mockery, and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that lawful and settled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well employed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility is necessary to the suppression of that reverence with which the majority of mankind look upon their governors; on those whom they see surrounded by splendour, and fortified by power. For though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet they are easily kept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their hands, till their veneration is dissipated by such wickedness and folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess of debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly and thoughtlessly employed, that priority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own eyes in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate; but dictates, though liberally enough bestowed, are generally without effect, the teacher gains few proselytes by instruction which his own behaviour contradicts; and young men miss the benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice, can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state and every new race is to gain the prudence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolics, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gayety with faltering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and that if they descend to competition, with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est.

You've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink;
'Tis time to quit the scene—'tis time to think.
ELPHINSTON.

Another vice of age, by which the rising generation may be alienated from it, is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command, and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution: and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their father's company.

He that would pass the latter part of life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct.

No. 51.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 11, 1750.

——Stultus labor est ineptiarum.— MART.

How foolish is the toil of trifling cares!
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have allowed a place in your paper to Euphelia's letters from the country, and appear to think no form of human life unworthy of your attention, I have resolved, after many struggles with idleness and diffidence, to give you some account of my entertainment in this sober season of universal retreat, and to describe to you the employments of those who look with contempt on the pleasures and diversions of polite life, and employ all their powers of censure and invective upon the uselessness, vanity, and folly, of dress, visits, and conversation.

When a tiresome and vexatious journey of four days had brought me to the house, where invitation, regularly sent for seven years together, had at last induced me to pass the summer, I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity, which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated. The old lady, who was my father's relation, was, indeed, very full of the happiness which she received from my visit, and according to the forms of obsolete breeding, insisted that I should recompense the long delay of my company with a promise not to leave her till winter. But, amidst all her kindness and caresses, she very frequently turned her head aside, and whispered, with anxious earnestness, some order to her daughters, which never failed to send them out with unpolite precipitation. Sometimes her impatience would not suffer her to stay behind; she begged my pardon, she must leave me for a moment; she went, and returned and sat down again, but was again disturbed by some new care, dismissed her daughters with the same trepidation, and followed them with the same countenance of business and solicitude.

However I was alarmed at this show of eagerness and disturbance, and however my curiosity was excited by such busy preparations as naturally promised some great event, I was yet too much a stranger to gratify myself with inquiries; but finding none of the family in mourning, I pleased myself with imagining that I should rather see a wedding than a funeral.

At last we sat down to supper, when I was informed that one of the young ladies, after whom I thought myself obliged to inquire, was under a necessity of attending some affair that could not be neglected: soon afterward my relation began to talk of the regularity of her family, and the inconvenience of London hours; and at last let me know that they had purposed that night to go to bed sooner than was usual, because they were to rise early in the morning to make cheesecakes. This hint sent me to my chamber, to which I was accompanied by all the ladies, who begged me to excuse some large sieves of leaves and flowers that covered two-thirds of the floor, for they intended to distil them when they were dry, and they had no other room that so conveniently received the rising sun.

The scent of the plants hindered me from rest, and therefore I rose early in the morning with a resolution to explore my new habitation. I stole unperceived by my busy cousins into the garden, where I found nothing either more great or elegant, than in the same number of acres cultivated for the market. Of the gardener I soon learned that his lady was the greatest manager in that part of the country, and that I was come hither at the time in which I might learn to make more pickles and conserves, than could be seen at any other house a hundred miles round.

It was not long before her ladyship gave me sufficient opportunities of knowing her character, for she was too much pleased with her own accomplishments to conceal them, and took occasion, from some sweetmeats which she set next day upon the table, to discourse for two long hours upon robs and gellies; laid down the best methods of conserving, reserving, and preserving all sorts of fruit; told us with great contempt of the London lady in the neighbourhood, by whom these terms were very often confounded; and hinted how much she should be ashamed to set before company, at her own house, sweetmeats of so dark a colour as she had often seen at Mistress Sprightly's.

It is, indeed, the great business of her life, to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection; and the employments to which she has bred her daughters, are to turn rose-leaves in the shade, to pick out the seeds of currants with a quill, to gather fruit without bruising it, and to extract bean-flower water for the skin. Such are the tasks with which every day, since I came hither, has begun and ended, to which the early hours of life are sacrificed, and in which that time is passing away which never shall return.

But to reason or expostulate are hopeless attempts. The lady has settled her opinions, and maintains the dignity of her own performances with all the firmness of stupidity accustomed to be flattered. Her daughters having never seen any house but their own, believe their mother's excellence on her own word. Her husband is a mere sportsman, who is pleased to see his table well furnished, and thinks the day sufficiently successful, in which he brings home a leash of hares to be potted by his wife.

After a few days I pretended to want books, but my lady soon told me that none of her books would suit my taste; for her part she never loved to see young women give their minds to such follies, by which they would only learn to use hard words; she bred up her daughters to understand a house, and whoever should marry them, if they knew any thing of good cookery, would never repent it.

There are, however, some things in the culinary science too sublime for youthful intellects, mysteries into which they must not be initiated till the years of serious maturity, and which are referred to the day of marriage, as the supreme qualification for connubial life. She makes an orange pudding, which is the envy of all the neighbourhood, and which she has hitherto found means of mixing and baking with such secrecy, that the ingredient to which it owes its flavour has never been discovered. She indeed, conducts this great affair with all the caution that human policy can suggest. It is never known beforehand when this pudding will be produced; she takes the ingredients privately into her own closet, employs her maids and daughters in different parts of the house, orders the oven to be heated for a pie, and places the pudding in it with her own hands, the mouth of the oven is then stopped, and all inquiries are vain.

The composition of the pudding she has, however, promised Clarinda, that if she pleases her in marriage, she shall be told without reserve. But the art of making English capers she has not yet persuaded herself to discover, but seems resolved that secret shall perish with her, as some alchymists have obstinately suppressed the art of transmuting metals.

I once ventured to lay my fingers on her book of receipts, which she left upon the table, having intelligence that a vessel of gooseberry wine had burst the hoops. But though the importance of the event sufficiently engrossed her care, to prevent any recollection of the danger to which her secrets were exposed, I was not able to make use of the golden moments; for this treasure of hereditary knowledge was so well concealed by the manner of spelling used by her grandmother, her mother, and herself, that I was totally unable to understand it, and lost the opportunity of consulting the oracle, for want of knowing the language in which its answers were returned.

It is, indeed, necessary, if I have any regard to her ladyship's esteem, that I should apply myself to some of these economical accomplishments for I overheard her two days ago, warning her daughters, by my mournful example, against negligence of pastry, and ignorance in carving; for you saw, said she, that, with all her pretensions to knowledge, she turned the partridge the wrong way when she attempted to cut it, and, I believe, scarcely knows the difference between paste raised, and paste in a dish.

The reason, Mr. Rambler, why I have laid Lady Bustle's character before you, is a desire to be informed whether, in your opinion, it is worthy of imitation, and whether I shall throw away the books which I have hitherto thought it my duty to read, for *the lady's closet opened*, *the complete servant maid*, and *the court cook*, and resign all curiosity after right and wrong, for the art of scalding damaseenes, without bursting them, and preserving the whiteness of pickled mushrooms.

Lady Bustle has, indeed, by this incessant application to fruits and flowers, contracted her cares into a narrow space, and set herself free from many perplexities with which other minds are disturbed. She has no curiosity after the events of a war, or the fate of heroes in distress; she can hear, without the least emotion, the ravage of a fire, or devastations of a storm; her neighbours grow rich or poor, come into the world or go out of it, without regard, while she is pressing the jelly-bag, or airing the store-room; but I cannot perceive that she is more free from disquiets than those whose understandings take a wider range. Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, and the rain sometimes falls upon fruit when it ought to be gathered dry. While her artificial wines are fermenting, her whole life is restlessness and anxiety. Her sweetmeats are not always bright, and the maid sometimes forgets the just proportions of salt and pepper, when venison is to be baked. Her conserves mould, her wines sour, and pickles mother; and, like all the rest of mankind, she is every day mortified with the defeat of her schemes, and the disappointment of her hopes.

With regard to vice and virtue she seems a kind of neutral being. She has no crime but luxury, nor any virtue but chastity; she has no desire to be praised but for her cookery; nor wishes any ill to the rest of mankind, but that whenever they aspire to a feast, their custards may be wheyish, and their pie-crusts tough.

I am now very impatient to know whether I am to look on these ladies as the great patterns of our sex, and to consider conserves and pickles as the business of my life; whether the censures which I now suffer be just, and whether the brewers of wines, and the distillers of washes, have a right to look with insolence on the weakness of

CORNELIA.

No. 52.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 15, 1750.

——Quoties flenti Theseius heros
Siste modum, dixit neque enim fortuna querendæ
Sola tua est, similes aliorum respice casus,
Mitius ista feres. OVID.

How oft in vain the son of Theseus said,
The stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone;
Weigh other's woes, and learn to bear thy own.
CATCOTT.

AMONG the various methods of consolation, to which the miseries inseparable from our present state have given occasion, it has been, as I have already remarked, recommended by some writers to put the sufferer in mind of heavier pressures, and more excruciating calamities, than those of which he has himself reason to complain.

This has, in all ages, been directed and practised; and, in conformity to this custom, Lipsius, the great modern master of the Stoic philosophy, has, in his celebrated treatise on *steadiness of mind*, endeavoured to fortify the breast against too much sensibility of misfortune, by enumerating the evils which have in former ages fallen upon the world, the devastation of wide-extended regions, the sack of cities, and massacre of nations. And the common voice of the multitude uninstructed by precept, and unprejudiced by authority, which, in questions that relate to the heart of man, is, in my opinion, more decisive than the learning of Lipsius, seems to justify the efficacy of this procedure; for one of the first comforts which one neighbour administers to another, is a relation of the like infelicity, combined with circumstances of greater bitterness.

But this medicine of the mind is like many remedies applied to the body, of which, though we see the effects, we are unacquainted with the manner of operation, and of which, therefore, some, who are unwilling to suppose any thing out of the reach of their own sagacity, have been inclined to doubt whether they have really those virtues for which they are celebrated, and whether their reputation is not the mere gift of fancy, prejudice, and credulity.

Consolation, or comfort, are words which, in their proper acceptation, signify some alleviation of that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy; they imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing than a diminution of the burden. A prisoner is relieved by him that sets him at liberty, but receives comfort from such as suggest considerations by which he is made patient under the inconvenience of confinement. To that grief which arises from a great loss, he only brings the true remedy who makes his friend's condition the same as before; but he may be properly termed a comforter, who by persuasion extenuates the pain of poverty, and shows in the style of *Hesiod*, that *half is more than the whole*.

It is, perhaps, not immediately obvious, how it can lull the memory of misfortune, or appease the throbbings of anguish, to hear that others are more miserable; others, perhaps, unknown or wholly indifferent, whose prosperity raises no envy, and whose fall can gratify no resentment. Some topics of comfort arising, like that which gave hope and spirit to the captive of Sesostris, from the perpetual vicissitudes of life, and mutability of human affairs, may as properly raise the dejected as depress the proud, and have an immediate tendency to exhilarate and revive. But how can it avail the man who languishes in the gloom of sorrow without prospect of emerging into the sunshine of cheerfulness, to hear that others are sunk yet deeper in the dungeon of misery, shackled with heavier chains, and surrounded with darker desperation?

The solace arising from this consideration, seems indeed the weakest of all others, and is perhaps never properly applied, but in cases where there is no place for reflections of more speedy and pleasing efficacy. But even from such calamities life is by no means free; a thousand ills incurable, a thousand losses irreparable, a thousand difficulties insurmountable, are known, or will be known, by all the sons of men. Native deformity cannot be rectified, a dead friend cannot return, and the hours of youth trifled away in folly, or lost in sickness, cannot be restored.

Under the oppression of such melancholy, it has been found useful to take a survey of the world, to contemplate the various scenes of distress in which mankind are struggling round us, and acquaint ourselves with the *terribiles visu formæ*, the various shapes of misery, which make havoc of terrestrial happiness, range all corners almost without restraint, trample down our hopes at the hour of harvest, and, when we have built our schemes to the top, ruin their foundations.

The first effect of this meditation is, that it furnishes a new employment for the mind, and engages the passions on remoter objects; as kings have sometimes freed themselves from a subject too haughty to be governed, and too powerful to be crushed, by posting him in a distant province, till his popularity has subsided or his pride been repressed. The attention is dissipated by variety, and acts more weakly upon any single part, as that torrent may be drawn off to different channels, which, pouring down in one collected body, cannot be resisted. This specics of comfort is, therefore, unavailing, in severe paroxysms of corporeal pain, when the mind is every instant called back to misery, and in the first shock of any sudden evil; but will certainly be of use against encroaching melancholy, and a settled habit of gloomy thoughts.

It is further advantageous, as it supplies us with opportunities of making comparisons in our own favour. We know that very little of the pain, or pleasure, which does not begin and end in our senses, is otherwise than relative; we are rich or poor, great or little, in proportion to the number that excel us, or fall beneath us, in any of these respects; and, therefore, a man, whose uneasiness arises from reflection on any misfortune that throws him below those with whom he was once equal, is comforted by finding that he is not yet the lowest.

There is another kind of comparison, less tending towards the vice of envy, very well illustrated

by an old poet,* whose system will not afford many reasonable motives to content. "It is," says he, "pleasing to look from shore upon the tumults of a storm, and to see a ship struggling with the billows; it is pleasing, not because the pain of another can give us delight, but because we have a stronger impression of the happiness of safety." Thus, when we look abroad, and behold the multitudes that are groaning under evils heavier than those which we have experienced, we shrink back to our own state, and instead of repining that so much must be felt, learn to rejoice that we have not more to feel.

By this observation of the miseries of others, fortitude is strengthened, and the mind brought to a more extensive knowledge of her own powers. As the heroes of action catch the flame from one to another, so they, to whom Providence has allotted the harder task of suffering with calmness and dignity, may animate themselves by the remembrance of those evils which have been laid on others, perhaps naturally as weak as themselves, and bear up with vigour and resolution against their own oppressions, when they see it possible that more severe afflictions may be borne.

There is still another reason why, to many minds, the relation of other men's infelicity may give a lasting and continual relief. Some, not well instructed in the measures by which Providence distributes happiness, are perhaps misled by divines, who, as Bellarmine makes temporal prosperity one of the characters of the true church, have represented wealth and ease as the certain concomitants of virtue, and the unfailing result of the Divine approbation. Such sufferers are dejected in their misfortunes, not so much for what they feel, as for what they dread; not because they cannot support the sorrows, or endure the wants, of their present condition, but because they consider them as only the beginnings of more sharp and more lasting pains. To these mourners it is an act of the highest charity to represent the calamities which not only virtue has suffered, but virtue has incurred; to inform them that one evidence of a future state, is the uncertainty of any present reward for goodness; and to remind them, from the highest authority, of the distresses and penury of men of whom the world was not worthy.

No. 53.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 18, 1750.

Φείδεο τῶν κτεανῶν. *Epigram Vet.*

Husband thy possessions.

THERE is scarcely among the evils of human life any so generally dreaded as poverty. Every other species of misery, those, who are not much accustomed to disturb the present moment with reflection, can easily forget, because it is not always forced upon their regard; but it is impossible to pass a day or an hour in the confluxes of men, without seeing how much indigence is exposed to contumely, neglect, and insult; and, in its lowest state, to hunger and nakedness; to injuries against which every passion is in arms, and to wants which nature cannot sustain.

Against other evils the heart is often hardened by true or by false notions of dignity and reputation; thus we see dangers of every kind faced with willingness, because bravery in a good or bad cause is never without its encomiasts and admirers. But in the prospect of poverty, there is nothing but gloom and melancholy; the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach; a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness, of which the hardships are without honour, and the labours without reward.

Of these calamities there seems not to be wanting a general conviction; we hear on every side the noise of trade, and see the streets thronged with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive than the hope of gain; and the whole world is put in motion, by the desire of that wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty; for it is more useful for defence than acquisition, and is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil.

Yet there are always some whose passions or follies lead them to a conduct opposite to the general maxims and practice of mankind; some who seem to rush upon poverty with the same eagerness with which others avoid it, who see their revenues hourly lessened, and the estates which they inherit from their ancestors mouldering away, without resolution to change their course of life; who persevere against all remonstrances, and go forward with full career, though they see before them the precipice of destruction.

It is not my purpose in this paper, to expostulate with such as ruin their fortunes by expensive schemes of buildings and gardens, which they carry on with the same vanity that prompted them to begin, choosing, as it happens in a thousand other cases, the remote evil before the lighter, and deferring the shame of repentance till they incur the miseries of distress. Those for whom I intend my present admonitions, are the thoughtless, the negligent, and the dissolute, who having, by the viciousness of their own inclinations, or the seducements of alluring companions, been engaged in habits of expense, and accustomed to move in a certain round of pleasures disproportioned to their condition, are without power to extricate themselves from the enchantments of customs, avoid the thought because they know it will be painful, and continue from day to day, and from month to month, to anticipate their revenues, and sink every hour deeper into the gulfs of usury and extortion.

This folly has less claim to pity, because it cannot be imputed to the vehemence of sudden passion; nor can the mischief which it produces be extenuated as the effect of any single act, which rage, or desire, might execute before there could be time for an appeal to reason. These men are advancing towards misery by soft approaches, and destroying themselves, not by the violence of a blow, which when once given, can never be recalled, but by a slow poison, hourly repeated, and obstinately continued.

This conduct is so absurd when it is examined by the unprejudiced eye of rational judgment, that nothing but experience could evince its pos-

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Lucretius.—C.

sibility; yet absurd as it is, the sudden fall of some families, and the sudden rise of others, prove it to be common; and every year sees many wretches reduced to contempt and want, by their costly sacrifices to pleasure and vanity.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purpose. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection, too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader, too much ardour takes away from the lover that easiness of address with which ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity, and incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men, thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and devoid alike of knowledge and of virtue! By whom is his profusion praised, but by wretches who consider him as subservient to their purposes, sirens that entice him to shipwreck, and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with scorn, or pity, neither of which can afford much gratification to pride, on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockeys, vintners and attorneys, who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to his appetite, and heighten his desires by counterfeited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by prodigality. Even when it is yet not discovered to be false, it is the praise only of those whom it is reproachful to please, and whose sincerity is corrupted by their interest; men who live by the riots which they encourage, and who know that whenever their pupil grows wise, they shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteries, if they could last, might the cravings of vanity, which is seldom very delicate, be satisfied; but the time is always hastening forward when this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, and when those who now surround him with obsequiousness and compliments, fawn among his equipage, and animate his riots, shall turn upon him with insolence, and reproach him with the vices promoted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man who squanders his estate, by vain or vicious expenses to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtained by others. To make any happiness sincere, it is necessary that we believe it to be lasting; since whatever we suppose ourselves in danger of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude and uneasiness, and the more value we set upon it, the more must the present possession be embittered. How can he then be envied for his felicity, who knows that its continuance cannot be expected, and who is conscious that a very short time will give him up to the gripe of poverty, which will be harder to be borne, as he has given way to more excesses, wantoned in greater abundance, and indulged his appetites with more profuseness?

It appears evident that frugality is necessary even to complete the pleasure of expense; for it may be generally remarked of those who squander what they know their fortune not sufficient to allow, that in their most jovial expense, there always breaks out some proof of discontent and impatience; they either scatter with a kind of wild desperation, and affected lavishness, as criminals brave the gallows when they cannot escape it, or pay their money with a peevish anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend idly, and to save meanly: having neither firmness to deny their passions, nor courage to gratify them, they murmur at their own enjoyments, and poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection on the cost.

Among these men there is often the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, by the help of wine and riot, and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep which disturbs their gayety and calls upon them to retreat from ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short continuance, and must be expiated by a long series of misery and regret. In a short time the creditor grows impatient, the last acre is sold, the passions and appetites still continue their tyranny, with incessant calls for their usual gratifications, and the remainder of life passes away in vain repentance, or impotent desire.

No. 54.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 22, 1750.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus; et sepulchri
Immemor, struis domos. HOR

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies.—FRANCIS

TO THE RAMBLER

SIR,

I HAVE lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me, if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects, which though of the utmost importance, and of indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topics of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reasoning, or elegances of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by

which mortals are deluded; show the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and show the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased, like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytic science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: he will there find vanity divested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gayeties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past; we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terror without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind the effects which the observation of death produces, in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by far the greater part it is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulf of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish, for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow, happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed, a more painful occurrence than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable, it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the

death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness; and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history know, that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed.

Tune etiam morieris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fallen? ere anger could subside
And love return, has great *Erasmus* died?

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our errors. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses of our friends, and endeavour by mutual endearments to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last.

ATHANATUS.

No. 55.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 25, 1750.

Maturo propior desine funeri
Inter ludere virgines,
Et stellis nebulam spargere candidis:
Non siquid Pholoen satis
Et te, Chlori, decet.——— HOR.

Now near to death that comes but slow,
Now thou art stepping down below;
Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
But think on ghosts and empty shades:
What suits with Pholoe in her bloom,
Gray Chloris, will not thee become;
A bed is different from a tomb. CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE been but a little time conversant in the world, yet I have already had frequent opportunities of observing the little efficacy of remonstrance and complaint, which, however extorted by oppression, or supported by reason, are detested by one part of the world as rebellion, censured by another as peevishness, by some heard with an appearance of compassion, only to betray any of those sallies of vehemence and resentment, which are apt to break out upon encouragement, and by others passed over with indifference and neglect, as matters in which they have no concern, and which, if they should endeavour to examine or regulate, they might draw mischief upon themselves.

Yet since it is no less natural for those who think themselves injured to complain, than for others to neglect their complaints, I shall venture to lay my case before you, in hopes that you will enforce my opinion, if you think it just, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if I am mistaken. I expect, at least that you will divest yourself of partiality, and that whatever your age or solemnity may be, you will not, with the dotard's insolence, pronounce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and refractory, only because you perceive that I am young.

My father dying when I was but ten years old, left me, and a brother two years younger than myself, to the care of my mother, a woman of birth and education, whose prudence or virtue he had no reason to distrust. She felt, for some time, all the sorrow which nature calls forth, upon the final separation of persons dear to one another; and as her grief was exhausted by its own violence, it subsided into tenderness for me and my brother, and the year of mourning was spent in caresses, consolations, and instruction, in celebration of my father's virtues, in professions of perpetual regard to his memory, and hourly instances of such fondness as gratitude will not easily suffer me to forget.

But when the term of this mournful felicity was expired, and my mother appeared again without the ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaintance began to tell her, upon whatever motives, that it was time to live like the rest of the world; a powerful argument, which is seldom used to a woman without effect. Lady Giddy was incessantly relating the occurrences of the town, and Mrs. Gravely told her privately, with great tenderness, that it began to be publicly observed how much she overacted her part, and that most of her acquaintance suspected her hope of procuring another husband to be the true ground of all that appearance of tenderness and piety.

All the officiousness of kindness and folly was busied to change her conduct. She was at one time alarmed with censure, and at another fired with praise. She was told of balls, where others shone only because she was absent; of new comedies, to which all the town was crowding; and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestic diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Miss Giddy to a play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a very fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty prevailed on to play at Mrs. Gravely's, and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions that had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather be absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without control, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expenses, and her company; and learned by degrees to drop an expression of contempt, or pity, at the mention of ladies whose husbands were suspected of restraining their pleasures, or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased

I was still favoured with some incidental pre

cepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa: but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirit; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other reasons she alleged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity, and idleness, that they soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety, and both I and my brother were despatched to boarding schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburdened I am not able to inform you, but I have reason to believe that trifles and amusements took still faster hold of her heart. At first, she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but, in a short time, both her visits and her letters were at an end, and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation, "that this girl will presently be a woman." I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, "Well, now I shall recover."

In six months more I came again, and with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother's embrace, when she stopped me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no other girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children to look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than, "Nay, if you are angry, Madam Steeple, you may walk off."

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of resentment a reason for continuing her malignity; and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child, and I know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden sister of my father, who could not bear to see women in hanging sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shown long enough in public places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as a usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing down the precipice of age, that I might reign without a superior. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every word and look is an offence. I never speak, but I pretend to some qualities and excellences, which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world, and when she comes home in vapours, I am certain that she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradiction and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution, only because I was born ten years too soon, and cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions, you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could show them, that though they may refuse to grow wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not music and compliments, but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while there yet remain a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

No. 56.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1750.

——Valeat res ludicra, si me
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum.
HOR

Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure, or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied. FRANCIS

NOTHING is more unpleasing than to find that offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence, a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to the purposes of life; because, though his conscience may easily acquit him of *malice prepense*, of settled hatred or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain, that he has not failed by negligence or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary, that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibility of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or by whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with won-

der, and now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affections of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as corrupt and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live but to infuse malignity, and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by trampling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness, for the sake of peevishness, petulance, or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyric always concluded with confessions of disgust; "he is a good man, but I cannot like him." Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue, without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill economy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity: men whose perceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably; that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or impute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse, that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain, and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or vanity, have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation, which are to be practised without expense, and by which those may be made our friends, who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn, for who would want that love which is so easily to be gained? And such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit!

Some, indeed, there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alleged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teasing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependents, and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own inclination, have forgotten that others have claim to the same deference.

Tyranny thus avowed is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain, and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness with a luxurious table and an open purse.

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers to give themselves up implicitly to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing; of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best designs where opposition must be encountered, and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty; but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard be had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain, and there will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And, indeed, when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent, I, who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imagining to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resentment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next paper, a place which they have never yet obtained: others writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted; some introducing their compositions with a menace of the contempt which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation; every one by different ways endeavouring

to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appearances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectation of renown; and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up, by one who expects to find it filled with his own production, and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal, I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes, however, do not yet forsake him; he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation, and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page, with which he is doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty what atonement can be made? For such calamities what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation, and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let therefore the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift, and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author; if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

No. 57.] Tuesday, October 2, 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quam magnum vectigal sit parsimonia. TULL.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

I am always pleased when I see literature made useful, and scholars descending from that elevation, which, as it raises them above common life, must likewise hinder them from beholding the ways of men otherwise than in a cloud of bustle and confusion. Having lived a life of business, and remarked how seldom any occurrences emerge for which great qualities are required, I have learned the necessity of regarding little things; and though I do not pretend to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or to limit the range of those powerful minds that carry light and heat through all the regions of knowledge, yet I have long thought, that the greatest part of those who lose themselves in studies by which I have not found that they grow much wiser, might, with more advantage both to the public and themselves apply their understandings to domestic arts, and store their minds with axioms of humble prudence and private economy.

Your late paper on frugality was very elegant and pleasing, but in my opinion, not sufficiently adapted to common readers, who pay little regard to the music of periods, the artifice of connexion, or the arrangement of the flowers of rhetoric; but require a few plain and cogent instructions, which may sink into the mind by their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness of the world, so beneficial in its various forms to every rank of men, from the highest of human potentates, to the lowest labourer or artificer; and the miseries which the neglect of it produces are so numerous and so grievous, that it ought to be recommended with every variation of address, and adapted to every class of understanding.

Whether those who treat morals as a science will allow frugality to be numbered among the virtues, I have not thought it necessary to inquire. For I, who draw my opinions from a careful observation of the world, am satisfied with knowing what is abundantly sufficient for practice, that if it be not a virtue, it is, at least, a quality, which can seldom exist without some virtues, and without which few virtues can exist. Frugality may be termed the daughter of Prudence, the sister of Temperance, and the parent of Liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependance, and invite corruption; it will almost always produce a passive compliance with the wickedness of others; and there are few who do not learn by degrees to practise those crimes which they cease to censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty as dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unanimous enough in abhorring it as destructive to happiness; and all to whom want is terrible upon whatever principle, ought to think themselves obliged to learn the sage maxims of our parsimonious ancestors, and attain the salutary arts of contracting expense; for without frugality none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor.

To most other acts of virtue or exertions of wisdom, a concurrence of many circumstances is necessary, some previous knowledge must be attained, some uncommon gifts of nature possessed, or some opportunity produced by an extraordinary combination of things; but the mere power of saving what is already in our hands, must be easy of acquisition to every mind; and as the example of Bacon may show, that the highest intellect cannot safely neglect it, a thousand instances will every day prove, that the meanest may practise it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great numbers, because to be rich, is to possess more than is commonly placed in a single hand; and, if many could obtain the sum which now makes a man wealthy, the name of wealth must then be transferred to still greater accumulations. But I am not certain that it is equally impossible to exempt the lower classes of mankind from poverty; because, though whatever be the wealth of the community, some will always have least, and he that has less than any other is comparatively poor; yet I do not see any coactive necessity that many should be without the indispensable conveniences of life; but am sometimes inclined to imagine, that, casual calamities excepted, there might, by universal prudence, be procured a universal exemption from want; and that he

who should happen to have least, might notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations which I do not remember that any political calculator has attempted, and in which the most perspicacious reasoner may be easily bewildered, it is evident that they to whom Providence has allotted no other care but of their own fortune and their own virtue, which make far the greater part of mankind, have sufficient incitements to personal frugality, since, whatever might be its general effect upon provinces or nations, by which it is never likely to be tried, we know with certainty, that there is scarcely any individual entering the world, who, by prudent parsimony, may not reasonably promise himself a cheerful competence in the decline of life.

The prospect of penury in age is so gloomy and terrifying, that every man who looks before him must resolve to avoid it; and it must be avoided generally by the science of sparing. For, though in every age there are some, who by bold adventures, or by favourable accidents, rise suddenly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge hopes of such rare events: and the bulk of mankind must owe their affluence to small and gradual profits, below which their expense must be resolutely reduced.

You must not therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend to the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom, *A penny saved is two-pence got;* which may, I think, be accommodated to all conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will save time when they forbear expense, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations will find, by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be inquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expense, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such questions no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end, by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that *a man's voluntary expense should not exceed his revenue.* A maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the warm, the fanciful, and the brave; *Let no man anticipate uncertain profits.* Let no man presume to spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which I suppose are, at least among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another, *Let no man squander against his inclination.* With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply; yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be borne away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

SOPHRON.

No. 58.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1750.

——Improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei. HOR.

But, while in heaps, his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possess'd;
There's something wanting still to make him bless'd.
FRANCIS.

As the love of money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that have given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topic more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches excite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the dangers of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have entrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in the poet or the sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shown, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburdened himself of wealth when he had tried its inquietudes, merely to enjoy the peace and leisure and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It is true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth, and rejected the kindest offers of fortune; but however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be, perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest; but though they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closest retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those, who either enjoyed riches, or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminences before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by showing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborne, that the inequality of distribution, at which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendour, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the frauds of fortune, and to show that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will shrink to nothing in the gripe: that she disguises life in extrinsic ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude, and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, it shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition has not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote superiority, as almost another and higher species of beings. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest meanness, and the darkest ignorance; but it is so confined only because others have been shown its folly, and its falsehood, because it has been opposed in its progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading its infection by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth, though it has not been able to extinguish avarice or ambition, or suppress that reluctance with which a man passes his days in a state of inferiority, must, at least, have made the lower conditions less grating and wearisome, and has consequently contributed to the general security of life, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine and circumvention, which must have been produced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, arising from an unshaken conviction that to be rich is to be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some violent impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the chief end of being, must surely be so much alarmed by the successive admonitions of those whose experience and sagacity have recommended them as the guides of mankind, as to stop and consider whether he is about to engage in an undertaking that will reward his toil, and to examine, before he rushes to wealth, through right and wrong, what it will confer when he has acquired it; and his examination will seldom fail to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporeal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure, nor block up the passages of anguish.

Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth contributes much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm error and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing can make that great, which the decree of nature has ordained to be little. The bramble may be placed in a hot-bed, but can never become an oak. Even royalty itself is not able to give that dignity which it happens not to find, but oppresses feeble minds, though it may elevate the strong. The world has been governed in the name of kings, whose existence has scarcely been perceived by any real effects beyond their own palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking hold of the heart, let us look round and see how it operates upon those whose industry or fortune has obtained it. When we find them oppressed with their own abundance, luxurious without pleasure, idle without ease, impatient and querulous in themselves, and despised or hated by the rest of mankind, we shall soon be convinced, that if the real wants of our condition are satisfied, there remains little to be sought with solicitude, or desired with eagerness.

No. 59.] Tuesday, October 9, 1750.

Est aliquid, fatale malum per verba levare:
Hoc querulam Prognen Halcyonenque facit.
Hoc erat in solo quare Pœantius antro
Voce fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.
Strangulat inclusus dolor, atque exæstuat intus:
Cogitur et vires multiplicare suas. OVID

Complaining oft gives respite to our grief;
From hence the wretched Progne sought relief;
Hence the Pœantian chief his fate deplores,
And vents his sorrow to the Lemnian shores:
In vain by secrecy he would assuage
Our cares; conceal'd they gather tenfold rage.
F. LEWIS

It is common to distinguish men by the names of animals which they are supposed to resemble. Thus a hero is frequently termed a lion, and a statesman a fox, an extortioner gains the appellation of vulture, and a fop the title of monkey. There is also among the various anomalies of character, which a survey of the world exhibits, a species of beings in human form, which may be properly marked out as the screech-owls of mankind.

These screech-owls seem to be settled in an opinion that the great business of life is to complain, and that they were born for no other purpose than to disturb the happiness of others, to lessen the little comforts, and shorten the short pleasures of our condition, by painful remembrances of the past, or melancholy prognostics of the future; their only care is to crush the rising hope, to damp the kindling transport, and allay the golden hours of gayety with the hateful dross of grief and suspicion.

To those whose weakness of spirits, or timidity of temper, subjects them to impressions from others, and who are apt to suffer by fascination, and catch the contagion of misery, it is extremely unhappy to live within the compass of a screech-owl's voice; for it will often fill their ears in the hour of dejection, terrify them with apprehensions which their own thoughts would never have produced, and sadden, by intruded sorrows, the day which might have been passed in amusements or in business; it will burden the heart with unnecessary discontents, and weaken for a time that love of life which is necessary to the vigorous prosecution of any undertaking.

Though I have, like the rest of mankind, many failings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by either friends or enemies, been charged with superstition; I never count the company which I enter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have been sometimes reproached as fool-hardy for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses my way, nor have any particular dread of a climacterical year: yet I confess that, with all my scorn of old women, and their tales, I consider it as an unhappy day when I happen to be greeted, in the morning, by Suspirius the screech-owl.

I have now known Suspirius fifty-eight years and four months, and have never yet passed an hour with him in which he has not made some attack upon my quiet. When we were first acquainted, his great topic was the misery of youth without riches; and whenever we walked out together he solaced me with a long enumeration of pleasures, which, as they were beyond the reach of my fortune, were without the verge of my desires, and which I should never have considered as the objects of a wish, had not his unseasonable representations placed them in my sight.

Another of his topics is the neglect of merit, with which he never fails to amuse every man whom he sees not eminently fortunate. If he meets with a young officer, he always informs him of gentlemen whose personal courage is unquestioned, and whose military skill qualifies them to command armies, that have, notwithstanding all their merit, grown old with subaltern commissions. For a genius in the church, he is always provided with a curacy for life. The lawyer he informs of many men of great parts and deep study, who have never had an opportunity to speak in the courts: and meeting Serenus the physician, "Ah, doctor," says he, "what, a-foot still, when so many blockheads are rattling in their chariots? I told you seven years ago that you would never meet with encouragement, and I hope you will now take more notice, when I tell you that your Greek, and your diligence, and your honesty, will never enable you to live like yonder apothecary, who prescribes to his own shop, and laughs at the physician."

Suspirius has, in his time, intercepted fifteen authors in their way to the stage; persuaded nine and thirty merchants to retire from a prosperous trade for fear of bankruptcy, broke off a hundred and thirteen matches by prognostications of unhappiness, and enabled the small pox to kill nineteen ladies, by perpetual alarms of the loss of beauty.

Whenever my evil stars bring us together, he never fails to represent to me the folly of my pursuits, and informs me that we are much older than when we begun our acquaintance, that the infirmities of decrepitude are coming fast upon me, that whatever I now get, I shall enjoy but a little time, that fame is to a man tottering on the edge of the grave of very little importance, and that the time is at hand when I ought to look for no other pleasures than a good dinner and an easy chair.

Thus he goes on in his unharmonious strain, displaying present miseries, and foreboding more, *νυκτικόραξ ἀεὶ θανατήφορος*, every syllable is loaded with misfortune, and death is always brought nearer to the view. Yet, what always raises my resentment and indignation, I do not perceive that his mournful meditations have much effect upon himself. He talks and has long talked of calamities, without discovering otherwise than by the tone of his voice that he feels any of the evils which he bewails or threatens, but has the same habit of uttering lamentations, as others of telling stories, and falls into expressions of condolence for past, or apprehension of future mischiefs, as all men studious of their ease have recourse to those subjects upon which they can most fluently or copiously discourse.

It is reported of the Sybarites, that they destroyed all their cocks, that they might dream out their morning dreams without disturbance. Though I would not so far promote effeminacy as to propose the Sybarites for an example, yet since there is no man so corrupt or foolish, but something useful may be learned from him, I could wish that, in imitation of a people not often to be copied, some regulations might be made to exclude screech-owls from all company, as the enemies of mankind, and confine them to some proper receptacle, where they may mingle sighs at leisure, and thicken the gloom of one another.

Thou prophet of evil, says Homer's Agamemnon, *thou never fortellest me good, but the joy of thy heart is to predict misfortunes.* Whoever is of the same temper, might there find the means of indulging his thoughts, and improving his vein of denunciation, and the flock of screech-owls, might hoot together without injury to the rest of the world. Yet, though I have so little kindness

for this dark generation, I am very far from intending to debar the soft and tender mind from the privilege of complaining, when the sigh arises from the desire not of giving pain, but of gaining ease. To hear complaints with patience, even when complaints are vain, is one of the duties of friendship; and though it must be allowed that he suffers most like a hero that hides his grief in silence,

Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.

His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart.
DRYDEN.

yet it cannot be denied, that he who complains acts like a man, like a social being, who looks for help from his fellow-creatures. Pity is to many of the unhappy a source of comfort in hopeless distress, as it contributes to recommend them to themselves, by proving that they have not lost the regard of others; and heaven seems to indicate the duty even of barren compassion, by inclining us to weep for evils which we cannot remedy.

No. 60.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1750.

—Quid sit pulchrum quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.
HOR.

Whose works the beautiful and base contain,
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules,
Than all the sober sages of the schools. FRANCIS.

ALL joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination, that realizes the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves.

Our passions are therefore more strongly moved, in proportion as we can more readily adopt the pains or pleasure proposed to our minds, by recognizing them as once our own, or considering them as naturally incident to our state of life. It is not easy for the most artful writer to give us an interest in happiness or misery, which we think ourselves never likely to feel, and with which we have never yet been made acquainted. Histories of the downfall of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with great tranquillity: the imperial tragedy pleases common auditors only by its pomp of ornament and grandeur of ideas; and the men whose faculties have been engrossed by business, and whose heart never fluttered but at the rise or fall of stocks, wonders how the attention can be seized, or the affection agitated, by a tale of love.

Those parallel circumstances and kindred images to which we readily conform our minds, are, above all other writings, to be found in narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The general and rapid narratives of history, which involve a thousand fortunes in the business of a day, and complicate innumerable incidents in one great transaction, afford few lessons applicable to private life, which derives its comforts and its wretchedness from the right or wrong management of things, which nothing but their frequency makes considerable, *Parva si non fiunt quotidie*, says Pliny, and which can have no place in those relations which never descend below the consultation of senates, the motions of armies, and the schemes of conspirators.

I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For, not only every man has, in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use; but there is such a uniformity in the state of man, considered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possibility of good or ill, but is common to human kind. A great part of the time of those who are placed at the greatest distance by fortune, or by temper, must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick, which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar, who passed his life among his books, the merchant, who conducted only his own affairs, the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, are considered as no proper objects of public regard, however they might have excelled in their several stations, whatever might have been their learning, integrity, and piety. But this notion arises from false measures of excellence and dignity, and must be eradicated by considering, that, in the esteem of uncorrupted reason, what is of most use is of most value.

It is, indeed, not improper to take honest advantages of prejudice, and to gain attention by a celebrated name; but the business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents, which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestic privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is, with great propriety, said by its author to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi*, whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

There are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as inquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science, or increase our virtue, are more important than public occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgotten in his account of Cataline, to remark, that *his walk was*

now quick, and again slow, as an indication of a mind revolving something with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melanethon affords a striking leeture on the value of time, by informing us, that when he made an appointment, he expeeted not only the hour but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspense: and all the plans and enterprises of De Witt are now of less importanee to the world than that part of his personal eharaeter, whieh represents him as *careful of his health, and negligent of his life.*

But biography has often been allotted to writers who seem very little aequainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performanee. They rarely afford any other aeeount than might be eollected from public papers, but imagine themselves writing a life when they exhibit a chronological series of aetions or preferments; and so little regard the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.

If now and then they condeseend to inform the world of partieular facts, they are not always so happy as to seleet the most important. I know not well what advantage posterity ean receive from the only eireumstanee by which Tiekell has distinguished Addison from the rest of mankind, *the irregularity of his pulse:* nor ean I think myself overpaid for the time spent in reading the life of Malherb, by being enabled to relate, after the learned biographer, that Malherb had two predominant opinions; one, that the looseness of a single woman might destroy all her boast of aneient deseent; the other, that the French beggars made use very improperly and barbarously of the phrase *noble Gentleman*, because either word ineluded the sense of both.

There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give mueh instruetion or delight, and why most aeeounts of partieular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expeet little intelligenee; for the ineidents whieh give excellenee to biography are of a volatile and evaneseent kind, sueh as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few ean portray a living aequaintanee, exeept by his most prominent and observable partieularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how mueh of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a sueeession of copies will lose all resemblanee of the original.

If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publie euriosity, there is danger least his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to eoneeal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an aet of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they ean no longer suffer by their deteetion; we therefore see whole ranks of eharaeters adorned with uniform panegyrie, and not to be known from one another, but by extrinsie and casual eireumstanees. "Let me remember," says Hale, "when I find myself inelined to pity a eriminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country." If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respeet to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

No. 61.] Tuesday, October 16, 1750.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret
Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem?—— HOR.

False praise can charm, unreal shame control,—
Whom, but a vicious or a sickly soul?— FRANCIS

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

It is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty euriosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligenee, and not only never to receive the current of report till it has satiated the greatest part of the nation, but at last to find it mudded in its course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every ehannel through whieh it flowed.

One of the ehief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the sehemes of the politic, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious; what ehanges of publie measures are approaehing; who is likely to be erushed in the eollision of parties; who is elimbing to the top of power, and who is tottering on the preeipiee of disgraee. But as it is very common for us to desire most what we are least qualified to obtain, I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifieations which my present situation can afford it; for being plaeed in a remote country, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostieations of events no longer doubtful, and to eonsider the expediency of sehemes already exeeuted or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deeeption in my prospeets, like a man pointing his teleseope at a remote star, whieh before the light reaehes his eye has forsaken the plaee from whieh it was emitted.

The mortifieation of being thus always behind the aetive world in my reflections and diseoveries, is exeeedingly aggravated by the petulanee of those whose health, or business, or pleasure, brings them hither from London. For, without considering the insuperable disadvantages of my condition, and the unavoidable ignoranee which absence must produee, they often treat me with the utmost supereiliousness of eontempt, for not knowing what no human sagaeity can diseover; and sometimes seem to consider me as a wretch seareely worthy of human converse, when I happen to talk of the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the healths of the dead, when I warn them of mischiefs already ineurred, or wish for measures that have been lately taken. They seem to attribute to the superiority of their intellects what they only owe to the aeeident of their eonditions, and think themselves indisputably entitled to airs of insolenee and authority, when they find another ignorant of faets, whieh, because they eehoed in the streets of London, they suppose equally publie in all other plaees, and known where they could neither be seen, related, nor conjeetured.

To this haughtiness they are indeed too much eneouraged by the respeet whieh, they receive amongst us, for no other reason than that they eome from London. For no sooner is the ar-

rival of one of these disseminators of knowledge known in the country, than we crowd about him from every quarter, and by innumerable inquiries flatter him into an opinion of his own importance. He sees himself surrounded by multitudes, who propose their doubts, and refer their controversies, to him, as to a being descended from some nobler region, and he grows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, solves all difficulties, and sets all objections at defiance.

There is, in my opinion, great reason for suspecting, that they sometimes take advantage of this reverential modesty, and impose upon rustic understandings, with a false show of universal intelligence; for I do not find that they are willing to own themselves ignorant of any thing, or that they dismiss any inquirer with a positive and decisive answer. The court, the city, the park, and exchange, are to those men of unbounded observation equally familiar, and they are alike ready to tell the hour at which stocks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

A short residence at London entitles a man to knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a despotic and dictatorial power of prescribing to the rude multitude, whom he condescends to honour with a biennial visit; yet, I know not well upon what motives, I have lately found myself inclined to cavil at this prescription, and to doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

It is well remembered here, that, about seven years ago, one Frolic, a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken from the school in this parish, and sent up to London to study the law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a genius designed by nature for extraordinary performances, he was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten, nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill fortune, till last summer a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolic was come down in the first post-chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity that one of his postilions had broken his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand; but that Mr. Frolic seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

Mr. Frolic next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green, and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new, and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice of the modish world. He showed us the deformity of our skirts and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper size were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our clothes, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topics of his discourse are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them; but never fails to hint how much they will be deficient, at their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is *to know the town*, he has not indeed hitherto informed us, though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great a value, or so difficult attainment.

But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have heard of the union of various characters in single persons, but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man's narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero; whatever has elevated the wit; whatever has endeared the lover, are all concentrated in Mr. Frolic, whose life has, for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

I question whether all the officers of the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand times on the point of perishing, sometimes by the terrors of foolish women in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge under which he has rencountered mountainous waves and dreadful cataracts.

Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the monument; he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches; he has been surrounded by robbers without number; he has headed parties at the playhouse; he has scaled the windows of every toast, of whatever condition; he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals; he has slept upon bulks, he has cut chairs, he has bilked coachmen; he has rescued his friends from the bailiffs; has knocked down the constable, has bullied the justice, and performed many other exploits, that have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolic has ratified his pretensions; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins the clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur; that no public entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed or favoured it; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolic.

Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr

Frolic has more wit, or knowledge, or courage, than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company, he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place in the first ranks of humanity, I cannot but conclude, that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolic thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect; and therefore I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolic. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise; but if he has swelled amongst us with empty boasts, and honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustic sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom to some region of more credulity.

I am, &c.

RURICOLA.

No. 62.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1750.

Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus,
Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum:
Nunc ego Medeæ vellem frænare dracones,
Quos habuit fugiens arce, Corinthe, tua;
Nunc ego jaciandas optarem sumere pennas,
Sive tuas, Perseu; Dædale, sive tuas. OVID.

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand
First sowed with teeming seed the furrow'd land;
Now to Medea's dragons fix my reins,
That swiftly bore her from Corinthian plains;
Now on Dædalian waxen pinions stray,
Or those which wafted Perseus on his way.

F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM a young woman of a very large fortune, which, if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now on the borders of twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit; and, to repair the consequences of expensive attendance and negligence of his affairs, married a lady much older than himself, who had lived in the fashionable world till she was considered as an incumbrance upon parties of pleasure, and as I can collect from incidental informations, retired from gay assemblies just time enough to escape the mortification of universal neglect.

She was, however, still rich, and not yet wrinkled; my father was too distressfully embarrassed to think much on any thing but the means of extrication, and though it is not likely that he wanted the delicacy which polite conversation will always produce in understandings not remarkably defective, yet he was contented with a match, by which he might be set free from inconveniences that would have destroyed all the pleasures of imagination, and taken from softness and beauty the power of delighting.

As they were both somewhat disgusted with their treatment in the world, and married, though without any dislike of each other, yet principally for the sake of setting themselves free from dependence on caprice or fashion, they soon retired into the country, and devoted their lives to rural business and diversions.

They had not much reason to regret the change of their situation; for their vanity, which had so long been tormented by neglect and disappointment, was here gratified with every honour that could be paid them. Their long familiarity with public life, made them the oracles of all those who aspired to intelligence or politeness. My father dictated politics, my mother prescribed the mode, and it was sufficient to entitle any family to some consideration, that they were known to visit at Mrs. Courtly's.

In this state they were, to speak in the style of novelists, made happy by the birth of your correspondent. My parents had no other child, I was therefore not brow-beaten by a saucy brother, or lost in a multitude of co-heiresses, whose fortunes being equal, would probably have conferred equal merit, and procured equal regard; and as my mother was now old, my understanding and my person had fair play, my inquiries were not checked, my advances towards importance were not repressed, and I was soon suffered to tell my own opinions, and early accustomed to hear my own praises.

By these accidental advantages I was much exalted above the young ladies with whom I conversed, and was treated by them with great deference. I saw none who did not seem to confess my superiority, and to be held in awe by the splendour of my appearance; for the fondness of my father made him pleased to see me dressed, and my mother had no vanity nor expenses to hinder her from concurring with his inclination.

Thus, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much desire after any thing beyond the circle of our visits; and here I should have quietly continued to portion out my time among my books and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour the entertainment of each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney coach, some frolic at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly, display the magnificence of a birth-night, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties; can enumerate, with exact chronology, the whole

succession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and harlequins; can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashions; and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to head-dresses, dances, and operas.

You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impressions, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings some new pleasure, and life is diversified with an inexhausted succession of felicity.

I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by showing me its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again, that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age: and that there is now neither politeness, nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

With this answer I was kept quiet for several years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had generally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance, and as we grew intimate gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splendour, the mirth, the happiness of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate and impartial comparison, that I am excelled by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgment, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in public, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, ecstacies, and despair; has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in public, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

O

But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of nothing else; and if you will not soothe my impatience, heighten my ideas, and animate my hopes, you may write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction.

RHODOCLIA.

No. 63.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1750.

——Habebat sæpe ducentos,
Sæpe decem servos; modò reges atque tetrarchas,
Omnia magna loquens: modo, sit mihi mensa tripes, et
Concha salis puri, et toga, quæ defendere frigus,
Quamvis crassa queat. HOR.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain
At morn, of kings and governors he prates;
At night,—"A frugal table, O ye fates,
A little shell the sacred salt to hold,
And clothes, though coarse, to keep me from the cold
FRANCIS.

It has been remarked, perhaps, by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state; which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance or chosen with deliberation; we are always disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagine the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the larger share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects, which we only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts into action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts, it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it, and however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal or ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity, and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy, or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must therefore be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion, in favour of something not yet experienced, and too much readiness to believe, that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes and external efficients.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, in which other classes of men are equally entangled. We often change a lighter for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that error cannot justly be reproached which reason could not obviate, nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and comprehensive of human life, with all its intricacies of combination, and varieties of connexion, is beyond the power of mortal intelligences. Of the state with which practice has not acquainted us we snatch a glimpse, we discern a point, and regulate the rest by passion and by fancy. In this inquiry every favourite prejudice, every innate desire, is busy to deceive us. We are unhappy, at least less happy than our nature seems to admit; we necessarily desire the melioration of our lot; what we desire we very reasonably seek, and what we seek we are naturally eager to believe that we have found. Our confidence is often disappointed, but our reason is not convinced, and there is no man who does not hope for something which he has not, though perhaps his wishes lie inactive, because he foresees the difficulty of attainment. As among the numerous students of Hermetic philosophy, not one appears to have desisted from the task of transmutation, from conviction of its impossibility, but from weariness of toil, or impatience of delay, a broken body, or exhausted fortune.

Irresolution and immutability are often the faults of men whose views are wide and whose imagination is vigorous and excursive because they cannot confine their thoughts within their own boundaries of action, but are continually ranging over all the scenes of human existence, and consequently are often apt to conceive that they fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start new possibilities of happiness. Thus they are busied with a perpetual succession of schemes, and pass their lives in alternate elation and sorrow, for want of that calm and immoveable acquiescence in their condition, by which men of slower understandings are fixed for ever to a certain point, or led on in the plain beaten track which their fathers and grandsires have trodden before them.

Of two conditions of life equally inviting to the prospect, that will always have the disadvantage which we have already tried; because the evils which we have felt we cannot extenuate; and though we have, perhaps from nature, the power as well of aggravating the calamity which we fear, as of heightening the blessing we expect, yet in those meditations which we indulge by choice, and which are not forced upon the mind by necessity, we have always the art of fixing our regard upon the more pleasing images, and suffer hope to dispose the lights by which we look upon futurity.

The good and ill of different modes of life are sometimes so equally opposed, that perhaps no man ever yet made his choice between them upon a full conviction and adequate knowledge; and therefore fluctuation of will is not more wonderful, when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is discovered on the other side, and the resolutions which are suggested by the nicest examination, are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father long eminent in conspicuous employments. His father harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression, which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect others, and gradually felt a desire of greatness, excited by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed that authority and influence which he had resolved to exert for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and was in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being either seduced or driven from his honest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the public, and sometimes with the schemes of the ministry. He was by degrees wearied with perpetual struggles to unite policy and virtue, and went back to retirement as the shelter of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind, by a blameless example of private virtue. Here he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence; but finding that corruption increased and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself again summoned to posts of public trust, from which new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and by vice, by too much or too little thought; yet inconstancy, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for inquiry and experiment, and he that steadily endeavours at excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in choosing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolutely follows a rough and winding path, will sooner reach the end of his journey than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of day-light in looking for smoother ground and shorter passages.

No. 64.] Saturday, October 27, 1750.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.
SALLUST.

To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

When Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life, concerning the infrequency of such a union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility or veneration, crowded about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and its continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependance.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and showing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to human kind, and makes every man without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestable evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigences, but pleasing in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite a uniformity of opinions, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions; yet such friends are to be shown rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of public opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incidents extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray: and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? And from those what can be expected, but acrimony, and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded: but the poison of discord is

infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable, whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and, therefore, to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations and, when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride, and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude, indeed, and heighten veneration; but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

No. 65.] TUESDAY, OCT. 30, 1750.

——Garrit aniles
Ex re fabellas.—— HOR.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

OBIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansary early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the valleys, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring; all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave in shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence, without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds whom the heat had assembled in the shade; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might soothe or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he

had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him: the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills,

——χείμαρροι ποταμοὶ, κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες,
Ἐς μισγάγκειαν συμβάλλετον ὄβριμον ὕδωρ,
Τῶνδέ τε τηλόσε δοῦπον ἐν οὔρεσιν ἔκλυε ποιμήν.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry showers,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours!
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, "Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errors and foilies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gayety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for awhile, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors, and that he who implores strength and courage from above shalt find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life."

No. 66.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1750.

——*Pauci dignoscere possunt*
Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remota
Erroris nebula. JUV

——How few
Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue?
How void of reason are our hopes and fears?
DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till perhaps the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructers of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and counted among vulgar errors the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, adds fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded

to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shown that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solicitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and, therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is no where to be found; and, though his discase still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their own nature, confined to a very small number; and the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition, which is known among us by the name of Vanity; which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest beard, and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frighted away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions, which are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts, and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partisans and abettors, often not less exasperated against each other than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness; but perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or error, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expense of wisdom and of virtue; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth, which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve, or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroic virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world; and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

No. 67.] TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1750.

Αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας ὡς λογος,
Καλῶς βλέπουσιν ομμασι, μέλλουσι δέ. EURIP

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope
Delusive hope still points to distant good,
To good that mocks approach.

THERE is no temper so generally indulged as hope; other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing to our view, promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope is, indeed, very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could descry no limits. Every scene about me was gay and gladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; the ground was painted with all the variety of spring, and all the choir of nature was singing in the groves. When I had recovered from the first raptures, with which the confusion of pleasure had for a time entranced me, I began to take a particular and deliberate view of this delightful region. I then perceived that I had yet higher gratifications to expect, and that at a small distance from me, there were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, and more lofty groves, where the birds, which I yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the power of melody. The trees about me were beautiful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms; but I was tempted to leave them by the sight of ripe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be plucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, but found, as I proceeded, that the colours of the field faded at my approach, the fruit fell before I reached it, the birds flew, still singing before me, and though I pressed onward with great celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures of which I could not yet gain the possession, and which seemed to mock my diligence, and to retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alternations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to go forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights would in time be overtaken. At length I saw an innumerable multitude of every age and sex, who seemed all to partake of some general felicity; for every cheek was flushed with confidence, and every eye sparkled with eagerness: yet each appeared to have some particular and secret pleasure, and very few were willing to communicate their intentions, or extend their concern beyond themselves. Most of them seemed, by the rapidity of their motion, too busy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger, and therefore I was content for a while to gaze upon them, without interrupting them with troublesome inquiries. At last I observed one man worn with time, and unable to struggle in the crowd: and therefore, supposing him more at leisure, I began to accost him: but he turned from me with anger, and told me he must not be disturbed, for the great hour of projection was now come when Mercury should lose his wings, and slavery should no longer dig the mine for gold.

I left him, and attempted another, whose softness of mien, and easy movement, gave me reason to hope for a more agreeable reception; but he told me with a low bow, that nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of serving me, which he could not now want, for a place which he had been twenty years soliciting would be soon vacant. From him I had recourse to the next, who was departing in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who by the course of nature could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new-invented bell; and another was on the point of discovering the longitude.

Being thus rejected whersoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from inquiry, and try what my own observation would discover: but seeing a young man, gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of Hope, the daughter of Desire, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me were incited by the promises of Hope, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth sitting on a throne; around her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view; she had a perpetual gayety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could with less perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowds that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of Hope was by two gates, one of which was kept by Reason, and the other by Fancy. Reason was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories, and long hesitation; but Fancy was a kind and gentle portress, she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency: so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of Reason, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of Reason there was a way to the throne of Hope, by a craggy, slippery, and winding path, called the *Strait of Difficulty*, which those who entered with the permission of the guard endeavoured to climb. But though they surveyed the way very cheerfully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent

the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way, and only a very small number were led up to the summit of Hope, by the hand of Fortitude. Of these few the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which Hope had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by Wisdom to the bowers of Content.

Turning then towards the gate of Fancy, I could find no way to the seat of Hope; but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was, on that side inaccessibly steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back, nor ever approached the throne of Hope, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they saw toiling in the *Strait of Difficulty*.

Part of the favourites of Fancy, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest, an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of Idleness, a calm and undisturbed retirement, from whence they could always have Hope in prospect, and to which they pleased themselves with believing that she intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth; but turning round, I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be Age, and the other Want. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and a universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

No. 68.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1750.

Vivendum recte, cum propter plurima, tum his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi.
JUV.

Let us live well: were it alone for this
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance to ignoble minds. HERVEY.

THE younger Pliny has very justly observed, that of actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, and wonder, and applause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in public view; but fortitude, diligence, and patience, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the crowd of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are borne up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect, which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours, and clandestine meditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents and petty occurrences; of wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence; of insect vexations which sting us and fly away, impertinences which buzz a while about us, and are heard no more; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated; of compliments which glide off the soul like other music, and are forgotten by him that gave and him that received them.

Such is the general heap out of which every man is to cull his own condition: for as the chymists tell us, that all bodies are resolvable into the same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients; so a few pains and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life, and of these the proportions are partly allotted by Providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chain of causes on which armies or nations are suspended; and even those who seem wholly busied in public affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestic scenes; from these they came into public life, to these they are every hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed; in these they have the reward of their toils, and to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is to give cheerfulness to those hours which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation cannot exhilarate; those soft intervals of unbended amusement, in which a man shrinks to his natural dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises, which he feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, and to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known by those who would make a just estimate either of his virtue or felicity; for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional, and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, in every house but their own, were a continual series of hypocrisy, and who concealed under fair appearances bad qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves out of the reach of censure, broke out from their restraint, like winds

imprisoned in their caverns, and whom every one had reason to love, but they whose love a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others who, without any show of general goodness, and without the attractions by which popularity is conciliated, are received among their own families as bestowers of happiness, and reverenced as instructors, guardians, and benefactors.

The most authentic witnesses of any man's character are those who know him in his own family, and see him without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carries virtue with him into his private apartments, and takes no advantage of unlimited power, or probable secrecy; if we trace him through the round of his time, and find that his character, with those allowances which mortal frailty must always want, is uniform and regular, we have all the evidence of his sincerity that one man can have with regard to another: and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, determine that his heart is pure.

The highest panegyric, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For, however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those who cannot see it; and, perhaps, it falls out very often that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown, and in the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments, as in their language, and have equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

There are very few faults to be committed in solitude, or without some agents, partners, confederates, or witnesses; and, therefore, the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to intrust; and failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed by that security which pride and folly generally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestic can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates palliations.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority thus acquired, is possessed without insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess, by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced; and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insolence or defamation; of a controller at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolic of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the great prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to invariable virtue. But guilt has always its horrors and solicitudes: and, to make it yet more shameful and detestable, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those, to whom nothing could give influence or weight, but their power of betraying.

No. 69.] Tuesday, November 13, 1750.

Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris; et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi
Paullatim lenta consumitis omnia morte. OVID

The dreaded wrinkles when poor Helen spied,
Ah! why this second rape?—with tears she cried
Time, thou devourer, and thou envious age,
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleased or please
Must sink, consumed by swift or slow degrees.
ELPHINSTON.

An old Greek epigrammatist, intending to show the miseries that attend the last stage of man, imprecates on them, who are so foolish as to wish for long life, the calamity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite; that decrepitude itself was an epitome of whatever is dreadful; and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can indeed scarcely retire without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds those who, in the former parts of the drama, were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of personal qualities, all involved in one common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries, which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude may conquer; by caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory. But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless; when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emerging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, imagines himself always fortified against

invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at last alter his will; and, therefore, all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is indeed too frequently the citadel of the dotard, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which he makes the stand against the upstart race that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that more was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than orbity, or want of children; and, indeed, to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures and his cares, have been engaged in the same events, and filled their minds with the same conceptions, this full-peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stands forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in the midst of multitudes, animated with hopes which he cannot share, and employed in business which he is no longer able to forward or retard; nor can he find any to whom his life or his death are of importance, unless he has secured some domestic gratifications, some tender employments, and endeared himself to some whose interest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of appearance naturally produces, that the conversation of the old and young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world with fulness of hope, and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so unpleasing as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence, which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man wonders in his turn that the world never can grow wiser, that neither precepts, nor testimonies, can cure boys of their credulity and sufficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are laid for him, till he finds himself entangled.

Thus one generation is always the scorn and wonder of the other, and the notions of the old and young are like liquors of different gravity and texture which never can unite. The spirits of youth sublimed by health, and volatilized by passion, soon leave behind them the phlegmatic sediment of weariness and deliberation, and burst out in temerity and enterprise. The tenderness, therefore, which nature infuses, and which long habits of beneficence confirm, is necessary to reconcile such opposition; and an old man must be a father to bear with patience those follies and absurdities which he will perpetually imagine himself to find in the schemes and expectations, the pleasures and the sorrows, of those who have not yet been hardened by time, and chilled by frustration.

Yet, it may be doubted, whether the pleasure of seeing children ripening into strength, be not overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall in the blossom, and others blasted in their growth: some shaken down with storms, some tainted with cankers, and some shrivelled in the shade: and whether he that extends his care beyond himself, does not multiply his anxieties more than his pleasures, and weary himself to no purpose, by superintending what he cannot regulate.

But though age be to every order of human beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly to be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no other end or ambition than to fill up the day and the night with dress, diversions, and flattery; and who, having made no acquaintance with knowledge, or with business, have constantly caught all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies age begins early, and very often lasts long; it begins when their beauty fades, when their mirth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time, all which gave them joy vanishes from about them; they hear the praises bestowed on others, which used to swell their bosoms with exultation. They visit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the habit of being delighted. But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and petulance inform them that their power and their value are past; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortless uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart, or exercise of the reason.

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old; and therefore we ought to inquire what provision can be made against that time of distress? what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness?

If it has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipating uncertain felicities, it cannot surely be supposed that old age, worn with labours, harassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or feel any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future; the past is very soon exhausted, all the events or actions of which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recollected; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of decaying man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulf of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish and precipices of horror.

No. 70.] SATURDAY, Nov. 17, 1750.

——*Argentea proles,*
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære. OVID

Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.
DRYDEN

HESIOD, in his celebrated distribution of mankind divides them into three orders of intellect. "The

first place," says he, "belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shown him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value."

If we survey the moral world, it will be found that the same division may be made of men, with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and desire, by comparing it with the Divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise between good and ill; who are moved on the one part by riches or pleasures, by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense; and, on the other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasures, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralist, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steeps of virtue, not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who are resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast off all care but for his present interest. It seems impossible that conviction should be on one side, and practice on the other; and that he who has seen the right way should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found; the wisest and best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency or surprise; and most are good no longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are without excitements, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence, has filled his mind with the excellence of virtue, and, having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right, and to consider every man that fails in any part of his duty, as without conscience and without merit; unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience, that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues, and rejecting others, or of being good or bad to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner, to prove, that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified against one crime are of equal force against all, and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or has by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity; and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no farther evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet, such is the state of all mortal virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrow space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left open to the incursions of appetite, or given up to the dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens that, in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth which may shoot out by proper cultivation; that the spark of heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is not yet extinguished, but may, by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degrees of excellence; it is indeed to exact from all that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude, that all goodness is lost, though it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed; for most minds are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

For this reason, every one should consider himself as entrusted, not only with his own conduct, but with that of others; and as accountable, not

only for the duties which he neglects, or the crime that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes; and not only to practise virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that for want of attention, we may teach others faults from which ourselves are free, or, by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and, having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the aberrations of that example which they choose for their directions.

No. 71.] TUESDAY, NOV. 20, 1750.

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis
Da veniam, properat vivere nemo satis. MART.

True, Sir, to live I haste, your pardon give,
For tell me, who makes haste enough to live?
F. LEWIS.

MANY words and sentences are so frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a superficial observer is inclined to believe, that they must contain some primary principle, some great rule of action, which it is proper always to have present to the attention, and by which the use of every hour is to be adjusted. Yet, if we consider the conduct of those sententious philosophers, it will often be found that they repeat these aphorisms, merely because they have somewhere heard them, because they have nothing else to say, or because they think veneration gained by such appearances of wisdom, but that no ideas are annexed to the words, and that, according to the old blunder of the followers of Aristotle, their souls are mere pipes or organs, which transmit sounds, but do not understand them.

Of this kind is the well-known and well attested position, that *life is short*, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a day, but which never yet within my reach of observation left any impression upon the mind; and perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a single man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was short till he was about to lose it.

It is observable that Horace, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diversified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator, spe longus*, given to procrastination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great distance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often say of the shortness of life, that at the time when it is necessarily shortest, we form projects which we delay to execute, indulge such expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and suffer those passions to gain upon us, which are only excusable in the prime of life.

These reflections were lately excited in my mind, by an evening's conversation with my friend Prospero, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an estate, and is now contriving to dispose and cultivate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleasure is to walk among stately trees, and lie musing in the heat of noon under their shade; he is therefore maturely considering how he shall dispose his walks and his groves, and has at last determined to send for the best plans from Italy, and forbear planting till the next season.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requisites which imagination can suggest are gathered together. Where our design terminates only in our own satisfaction, the mistake is of no great importance; for the pleasure of expecting enjoyment is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almost every wish is found a disappointment; but when many others are interested in an undertaking, when any design is formed, in which the improvement or security of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy either of wisdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day that passes over us, takes away from our power, and how soon an idle purpose to do an action sinks into a mournful wish that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the present hour, to catch the pleasures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our command.

Τὸ ῥόδον ἀκμάζει βαιὸν χρόνον· ἦν δὲ παρέλθῃς,
Ζητῶν εὑρήσεις οὐ ῥόδον, ἀλλὰ βάτον.

Soon fades the rose; once past the fragrant hour,
The loiterer finds a bramble for a flower.

But surely these exhortations, may with equal propriety, be applied to better purposes; it may be at least inculcated that pleasures are more safely postponed than virtues, and that greater loss is suffered by missing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolic and noisy merriment.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as culpable in some degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

It is lamented by Hearne, the learned antiquary of Oxford, that this general forgetfulness of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the students of monuments and records; as their employment consists in first collecting, and afterwards in arranging or abstracting, what libraries afford them, they ought to amass no more than they can digest; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on searching and transcribing, call for new supplies, when they are already overburdened, and at last leave their work unfinished. *It is*, says he, *the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him.*

Thus, not only in the slumber of sloth, but in the dissipation of ill-directed industry, is the shortness of life generally forgotten. As some men lose their hours in laziness, because they suppose, that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect; others busy themselves in providing that no length of life may want employ-

ment; and it often happens, that sluggishness and activity are equally surprised by the last summons, and perish not more differently from each other, than the fowl that received the shot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the bush.

Among the many improvements made by the last centuries in human knowledge, may be numbered the exact calculations of the value of life; but whatever may be their use in traffic, they seem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the acquisition of money, than of wisdom; the computer refers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but persists, in contempt of probability, to foretell old age to himself, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmost verge of human existence, and see thousands and ten thousands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and so strongly guarded by hope and fear against the approach of reason, that neither science nor experience can shake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we see and confess its uncertainty and shortness.

Divines have, with great strength and ardour, shown the absurdity of delaying reformation and repentance; a degree of folly, indeed, which sets eternity to hazard. It is the same weakness, in proportion to the importance of the neglect, to transfer any care, which now claims our attention, to a future time; we subject ourselves to needless dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make provision for the execution of designs, of which the opportunity once missed never will return.

As he that lives longest lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task, which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away those months and years, in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little; and that since the few moments remaining are to be considered as the last trust of Heaven, not one is to be lost.

No. 72.] Saturday, Nov. 24, 1750.

Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status, et res,
Tentantem majora, fere presentibus æquum. HOR.

Yet Aristippus every dress became,
In every various change of life the same;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the present held an equal mind. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Those who exalt themselves into the chair of instruction, without inquiring whether any will submit to their authority, have not sufficiently considered how much of human life passes in little incidents, cursory conversation, slight business, and casual amusements; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condescending to regard those petty qualities, which grow important only by their frequency, and which, though they produce no single acts of heroism, nor astonish us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life sweet or bitter by imperceptible instillations. They operate unseen and unregarded, as change of air makes us sick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their salutary or malignant effects.

You have shown yourself not ignorant of the value of those subaltern endowments, yet have hitherto neglected to recommend good-humour to the world, though a little reflection will show you that it is the *balm of being*, the quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind must owe its power of pleasing. Without good-humour, learning and bravery can only confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance. Without good-humour, virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightness; but must always be viewed at a distance, and will scarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleased; a constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition; like that which every man perceives in himself, when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is a state between gayety and unconcern, the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the gratification of another.

It is imagined by many, that whenever they aspire to please, they are required to be merry, and to show the gladness of their souls by flights of pleasantry, and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time heard with applause and admiration, they seldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to easiness and good-humour, as the eye gazes awhile on eminence glittering with the sun, but soon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

Gayety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak spirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gayety seldom fails to give some pain; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and despair. Good-humour boasts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending.

It is well known that the most certain way to give any man pleasure, is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and depress him. We see many that by this art only, spend their days in the midst of caresses, invitations, and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the universal favourites of both sexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the world will, indeed, be generally found such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, and are not considered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themselves with common accomplishments, and endeavour rather to solicit kindness than to raise esteem; therefore, in assemblies and places of resort, it seldom fails to happen, that though at the entrance of some particular person, every face brightens with gladness, and every hand is extended in salutation, yet if you

pursue him beyond the first exchange of civilities, you will find him of very small importance, and only welcome to the company, as one by whom all conceive themselves admired, and with whom any one is at liberty to amuse himself when he can find no other auditor or companion; as one with whom all are at ease, who will hear a jest without criticism, and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs with every wit, and yields to every disputer.

There are many whose vanity always inclines them to associate with those from whom they have no reason to fear mortification; and there are times in which the wise and the knowing are willing to receive praise without the labour of deserving it, in which the most elevated mind is willing to descend, and the most active to be at rest. All therefore are at some hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon easy terms, and who will relieve them from solitude, without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are most inclined to love when we have nothing to fear, and he that encourages us to please ourselves, will not be long without preference in our affection to those whose learning holds us at the distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

It is remarked by Prince Henry, when he sees Falstaff lying on the ground, that *he could have better spared a better man.* He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented; but while his conviction compelled him to do justice to superior qualities, his tenderness still broke out at the remembrance of Falstaff, of the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom he had passed his time in all the luxury of idleness, who had gladded him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and despise.

You may perhaps think this account of those who are distinguished for their good humour, not very consistent with the praises which I have bestowed upon it. But surely nothing can more evidently show the value of this quality, than that it recommends those who are destitute of all other excellences, and procures regard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the dull.

Good humour is indeed generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for, being considered as a cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by those that, having excellences of higher reputation and brighter splendour, perhaps imagine that they have some right to gratify themselves at the expense of others, and are to demand complaisance rather than to practice it. It is by some unfortunate mistake that almost all those who have any claim to esteem or love, press their pretensions with too little consideration of others. This mistake, my own interest, as well as my zeal for general happiness, makes me desirous to rectify; for I have a friend, who, because he knows his own fidelity and usefulness, is never willing to sink into a companion: I have a wife, whose beauty first subdued me, and whose wit confirmed her conquest, but whose beauty now serves no other purpose than to entitle her to tyranny, and whose wit is only used to justify perverseness.

Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than to lose the will to please, when we are conscious of the power, or show more cruelty than to choose any kind of influence before that of kindness. He that regards the welfare of others, should make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied; and he that considers the want which every man feels, or will feel, of external assistance, must rather wish to be surrounded by those that love him, than by those that admire his excellences, or solicit his favours; for admiration ceases with novelty, and interest gains its end and retires. A man whose great qualities want the ornament of superficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted.

I am, &c.

PHILOMIDES.

No. 73.] TUESDAY, NOV. 27, 1750.

Stulte, quid O frustra votis puerilibus optas?
Quæ non ulla tulit, fortve, feretve dies. OVID.

Why thinks the fool, with childish hope, to see
What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be?

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IF you feel any of that compassion which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason from observation to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the mortification of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness. I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to inquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity: and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant or however just.

I was born in a remote county, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in English history, and extends its claims of affinity to the Tudors and Plantagenets. My ancestors by little and little wasted their patrimony, till my father had not enough left for the support of a family, without descending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three sisters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is suspected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjusting properly the claims of his children, and who, perhaps, without design, enriched his daughters by beggaring his son. My aunts being, at the death of their father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for softness of behaviour, were suffered to live unsolicited, and by accumulating the interest of their portions, grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleased himself with foreseeing that the possessions of those ladies must revert at last to the hereditary estate, and, that his family might lose none of its dignity, resolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment: whenever therefore I discovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which

I might be reproached when I should come to my aunt's estate.

In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our constant practice to have recourse to futurity. If any of our neighbours surpassed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to supply us. If any purseproud upstart was deficient in respect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our estate was to be repaired. We registered every act of civility and rudeness, inquired the number of dishes at every feast, and minuted the furniture of every house, that we might, when the hour of affluence should come, be able to eclipse all their splendour, and surpass all their magnificence.

Upon plans of elegance, and schemes of pleasure, the day rose and set, and the year went round unregarded, while we were busied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the manor-house should be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amusement of our leisure, and the solace of our exigences; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune should be enjoyed; for in this our conversation always ended, on whatever subject it began. We had none of the collateral interests, which diversify the life of others with joys and hopes, but had turned our whole attention on one event, which we could neither hasten nor retard, and had no other object of curiosity than the health or sickness of my aunts, of which we were careful to procure very exact and early intelligence.

This visionary opulence for a while soothed our imagination, but afterwards fired our wishes, and exasperated our necessities, and my father could not always restrain himself from exclaiming, that no creature had so many lives as a cat and an old maid. At last upon the recovery of his sister from an ague, which she was supposed to have caught by sparing fire, he began to lose his stomach, and four months afterwards sunk into the grave.

My mother, who loved her husband, survived him but a little while, and left me the sole heir of their lands, their schemes, and their wishes. As I had not enlarged my conceptions either by books or conversation, I differed only from my father by the freshness of my cheeks, and the vigour of my step: and, like him, gave way to no thoughts but of enjoying the wealth which my aunts were hoarding.

At length the eldest fell ill. I paid the civilities and compliments which sickness requires with the utmost punctuality. I dreamed every night of escutcheons and white gloves, and inquired every morning at an early hour, whether there were any news of my dear aunt. At last a messenger was sent to inform me that I must come to her without the delay of a moment. I went and heard her last advice, but opening her will, found that she had left her fortune to her second sister.

I hung my head; the youngest sister threatened to be married, and every thing was disappointment and discontent. I was in danger of losing irreparably one third of my hopes, and was condemned still to wait for the rest. Of part of my terror I was soon eased; for the youth, whom his relations would have compelled to marry the old lady, after innumerable stipulations, articles, and settlements, ran away with the daughter of his father's groom; and my aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of man, resolved never to listen more to amorous addresses.

Ten years longer I dragged the shackles of expectation, without ever suffering a day to pass in which I did not compute how much my chance was improved of being rich to-morrow. At last the second lady died, after a short illness, which yet was long enough to afford her time for the disposal of her estate, which she gave to me after the death of her sister.

I was now relieved from part of my misery; a large fortune, though not in my power, was certain and unalienable; nor was there now any danger that I might at last be frustrated of my hopes by fret of dotage, the flatteries of a chamber-maid, the whispers of a tale-bearer, or the officiousness of a nurse. But my wealth was yet in reversion, my aunt was to be buried before I could emerge to grandeur and pleasure; and there was yet, according to my father's observation, nine lives between me and happiness.

I however lived on, without any clamours of discontent, and comforted myself with considering that all are mortal, and they who are continually decaying, must at last be destroyed.

But let no man from this time suffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt. The good gentlewoman was very regular in her hours, and simple in her diet; and in walking or sitting still, waking or sleeping, had always in view the preservation of her health. She was subject to no disorder but hypochondriac dejection; by which, without intention, she increased my miseries, for whenever the weather was cloudy, she would take her bed and send me notice that her time was come. I went with all the haste of eagerness, and sometimes received passionate injunctions to be kind to her maid, and directions how the last offices should be performed; but if before my arrival the sun happened to break out, or the wind to change, I met her at the door, or found her in the garden, bustling and vigilant, with all the tokens of long life.

Sometimes, however, she fell into distempers, and was thrice given over by the doctor, yet she found means of slipping through the gripe of death, and after having tortured me three months at each time with violent alternations of hope and fear, came out of her chamber without any other hurt than the loss of flesh, which in a few weeks she recovered by broths and jellies.

As most have sagacity sufficient to guess at the desires of an heir, it was the constant practice of those who were hoping at second hand, and endeavoured to secure my favour against the time when I should be rich, to pay their court, by informing me that my aunt began to droop, that she had lately a bad night, that she coughed feebly, and that she could never climb May hill; or, at least, that the autumn would carry her off. Thus was I flattered in the winter with the piercing winds of March, and in summer with the fogs of September. But she lived through spring and fall, and set heat and cold at defiance, till, after near half a century, I buried her on the fourteenth of last June, aged ninety-three years, five months, and six days.

For two months after her death I was rich, and was pleased with that obsequiousness and reverence which wealth instantaneously pro

cures. But this joy is now past, and I have returned again to my old habit of wishing. Being accustomed to give the future full power over my mind, and to start away from the scene before me to some expected enjoyment, I deliver up myself to the tyranny of every desire which fancy suggests, and long for a thousand things which I am unable to procure. Money has much less power than is ascribed to it by those that want it. I had formed schemes which I cannot execute, I had supposed events which do not come to pass, and the rest of my life must pass in craving solicitude, unless you can find some remedy for a mind corrupted with an inveterate disease of wishing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reason tells me will never be supplied.

I am, &c.

CUPIDUS.

No. 74.] SATURDAY, DEC. 1, 1750.

Rizatur de lana sæpe caprina. HOR.

For nought tormented, she for nought torments.
ELPHINSTON.

MEN seldom give pleasure when they are not pleased themselves; it is necessary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulness, that in whatever state we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or to afford protection, we may secure the love of those with whom we transact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours, may spare any attention to his behaviour, and that usefulness will always procure friends; yet it has been found, that there is an art of granting requests, an art very difficult of attainment; that officiousness and liberality may be so adulterated, as to lose the greater part of their effect; that compliance may provoke, relief may harass, and liberality distress.

No disease of the mind can more fatally disable it from benevolence, the chief duty of social beings, than ill humour or peevishness; for though it breaks not out in paroxysms of outrage, nor bursts into clamour, turbulence, and bloodshed, it wears out happiness by slow corrosion, and small injuries incessantly repeated. It may be considered as the canker of life, that destroys its vigour, and checks its improvement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged, as to outrun the motions of the will, and discover itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree disgusting and offensive, because no rectitude of intention, nor softness of address, can ensure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peevish man, and exerting ourselves in the most diligent civility, an unlucky syllable displeases, an unheeded circumstance ruffles and exasperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourselves upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are frustrated at once; and all our assiduity forgotten in the casual tumult of some trifling irritation.

This troublesome impatience is sometimes nothing more than the symptoms of some deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confess his resentment, or sorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the first passages that are opened, and to let his passions boil over upon those whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious course of sickness frequently produces such an alarming apprehension of the least increase of uneasiness, as keeps the soul perpetually on the watch, such a restless and incessant solicitude, as no care or tenderness can appease, and can only be pacified by the cure of the distemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakness, is the captiousness of old age. When the strength is crushed, the senses are dulled, and the common pleasures of life become insipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneasiness to causes not wholly out of our power, and please ourselves with fancying that we suffer by neglect, unkindness, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We therefore revenge our pains upon those on whom we resolve to charge them; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greatest need of tenderness and assistance.

But though peevishness may sometimes claim our compassion, as the consequence or concomitant of misery, it is very often found, where nothing can justify or excuse its admission. It is frequently one of the attendants on the prosperous, and is employed by insolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in harassing subjection. It is the offspring of idleness or pride; of idleness anxious for trifles; or pride unwilling to endure the least obstruction of her wishes. Those who have long lived in solitude, indeed naturally contract this unsocial quality, because, having long had only themselves to please, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations; their singularities therefore are only blameable, when they have imprudently or morosely withdrawn themselves from the world; but there are others, who have, without any necessity, nursed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit submissiveness the condition of their favour, and suffering none to approach them, but those who never speak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himself up to his own fancy, and converses with none but such as he hires to lull him on the down of absolute authority, to soothe him with obsequiousness, and regale him with flattery, soon grows too slothful for the labour of contest, too tender for the asperity of contradiction, and too delicate for the coarseness of truth, a little opposition offends, a little restraint enrages, and a little difficulty perplexes him; having been accustomed to see every thing give way to his humour, he soon forgets his own littleness, and expects to find the world rolling at his beck, and all mankind employed to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to her by an aunt, which made her very early independent, and placed her in a state of superiority to all about her. Having no superfluity of understanding, she was soon intoxicated by the flatteries of her maid, who informed her that

ladies, such as she, had nothing to do but take pleasure their own way; that she wanted nothing from others, and had therefore no reason to value their opinion; that money was every thing; and that they who thought themselves ill-treated, should look for better usage among their equals.

Warm with these generous sentiments, Tetrica came forth into the world, in which she endeavoured to force respect by haughtiness of mien and vehemence of language; but having neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommon degree, she suffered such mortifications from those who thought themselves at liberty to return her insults, as reduced her turbulence to cooler malignity, and taught her to practise her arts of vexation only where she might hope to tyrannize without resistance. She continued from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year to torment all her inferiors with so much diligence, that she has formed a principle of disapprobation, and finds in every place something to grate her mind, and disturb her quiet.

If she takes the air, she is offended with the heat or cold, the glare of the sun, or the gloom of the clouds; if she makes a visit, the room in which she is to be received, is too light, or too dark, or furnished with something which she cannot see without aversion. Her tea is never of the right sort; the figures on the China give her disgust. Where there are children, she hates the gabble of brats; where there are none, she cannot bear a place without some cheerfulness and rattle. If many servants are kept in a house, she never fails to tell how Lord Lavish was ruined by a numerous retinue; if few, she relates the story of a miser that made his company wait on themselves. She quarrelled with one family, because she had an unpleasant view from their windows; with another, because the squirrel leaped within two yards of her; and with a third, because she could not bear the noise of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers she is the proverbial torment. She compels them to alter their work, then to unmake it, and contrive it after another fashion; then changes her mind, and likes it better as it was at first; then will have a small improvement. Thus she proceeds till no profit can recompense the vexation; they at last leave the clothes at her house and refuse to serve her. Her maid, the only being that can endure her tyranny, professes to take her own course, and hear her mistress talk. Such is the consequence of peevishness; it can be borne only when it is despised.

It sometimes happens that too close an attention to minute exactness, or a too rigorous habit of examining every thing by the standard of perfection, vitiates the temper, rather than improves the understanding, and teaches the mind to discern faults with unhappy penetration. It is incident likewise to men of vigorous imagination to please themselves too much with futurities, and to fret because those expectations are disappointed, which should never have been formed. Knowledge and genius are often enemies to quiet, by suggesting ideas of excellence, which men and the performances of men cannot attain. But let no man rashly determine, that his unwillingness to be pleased is a proof of understanding, unless his superiority appears from less doubtful evidence; for though peevishness may sometimes justly boast its descent from learning or from wit, it is much oftener of base extraction, the child of vanity, and nursling of ignorance.

No. 75.] TUESDAY, DEC. 4, 1750.

Diligitur nemo, nisi cui Fortuna secunda est,
Quæ, simul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat.

OVID.

When smiling Fortune spreads her golden ray,
All crowd around to flatter and obey:
But when she thunders from an angry sky,
Our friends, our flatterers, our lovers fly.

MISS A. W*

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE diligence with which you endeavour to cultivate the knowledge of nature, manners, and life, will perhaps incline you to pay some regard to the observations of one who has been taught to know mankind by unwelcome information, and whose opinions are the result, not of solitary conjectures, but of practice and experience.

I was born to a large fortune, and bred to the knowledge of those arts which are supposed to accomplish the mind, and adorn the person of a woman. To these attainments, which custom and education almost forced upon me, I added some voluntary acquisitions by the use of books, and the conversation of that species of men whom the ladies generally mention with terror and aversion under the name of scholars, but whom I have found a harmless and inoffensive order of beings not so much wiser than ourselves, but that they may receive as well as communicate knowledge, and more inclined to degrade their own character by cowardly submission, than to overbear or oppress us with their learning or their wit.

From these men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, something may be gained, which, embellished with elegancy, and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation; and from my acquaintance with the bookish part of the world, I derived many principles of judgment and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myself the general regard in every place of concourse or pleasure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation, my remarks were remembered by those who desired the second degree of fame, my mien was studied, my dress was imitated, my letters were handed from one family to another, and read by those who copied them as sent to themselves; my visits were solicited as honours, and multitudes boasted of an intimacy with Melissa, who had only seen me by accident, and whose familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courtesy.

I shall make no scruple of confessing that I was pleased with this universal veneration, because I always considered it as paid to my intrinsic qualities and inseparable merit, and very easily persuaded myself that fortune had no part in my superiority. When I looked upon my glass, I saw youth and beauty, with health that might give me reason to hope their continuance; when I examined my mind, I found some strength of judgment, and fertility of fancy: and was told

* Anna Williams.

that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and caresses: to please Melissa was the general ambition, and every stratagem of artful flattery was practised upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them; for they prove, at least, our power, and show that our favour is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected; for an honest mind is not apt to suspect, and no one exerts the power of discernment with much vigour when self-love favours the deceit.

The number of adorers, and the perpetual distraction of my thoughts by new schemes of pleasure, prevented me from listening to any of those who crowd in multitudes to give girls advice, and kept me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-seventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontested excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund, in which my money was placed, reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatness and independence.

I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of sorrow, or pusillanimity of dejection. Indeed, I did not know how much I had lost, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty, than of my fortune, it did not suddenly enter my imagination, that Melissa could sink beneath her established rank, while her form and her mind continued the same; that she could cease to raise admiration but by ceasing to deserve it, or feel any stroke but from the hand of time.

It was in my power to have concealed the loss, and to have married, by continuing the same appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune; but I was not so far sunk in my own esteem, as to submit to the baseness of fraud, or to desire any other recommendation than sense and virtue. I therefore dismissed my equipage, sold those ornaments which were become unsuitable to my new condition, and appeared among those with whom I used to converse with less glitter, but with equal spirit.

I found myself received at every visit with sorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and consolation so frequently repeated, that my friends plainly consulted rather their own gratification than my relief. Some from that time refused my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my visits; some visited me, but after a longer interval than usual, and every return was still with more delay; nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my present and former condition, to tell me how much it must trouble me to want the splendour which I became so well, to look at pleasures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to sink o a level with those by whom I had been considered as moving in a higher sphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and submission, which I was now no longer to expect.

Observations like these are commonly nothing better than covert insults, which serve to give vent to the flatulence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honesty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindness is intended; I will, therefore, so far maintain my antiquated claim to politeness, as to venture the establishment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of misfortunes of which the sufferer does not complain, and which there are no means proposed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which necessarily give pain whenever they return, and which perhaps might not have revived but by absurd and unseasonable compassion.

My endless train of lovers immediately withdrew, without raising any emotions. The greater part had indeed always professed to court, as it is termed, upon the square, had inquired my fortune, and offered settlements; these had undoubtedly a right to retire without censure, since they had openly treated for money, as necessary to their happiness, and who can tell how little they wanted any other portion? I have always thought the clamours of women unreasonable, who imagine themselves injured because the men, who followed them upon the supposition of a greater fortune, reject them when they are discovered to have less. I have never known any lady, who did not think wealth a title to some stipulations in her favour: and surely what is claimed by the possession of money is justly forfeited by its loss. She that has once demanded a settlement has allowed the importance of fortune; and when she cannot show pecuniary merit, why should she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?

My lovers were not all contented with silent desertion. Some of them revenged the neglect which they had formerly endured by wanton and superfluous insults, and endeavoured to mortify me, by paying, in my presence, those civilities to other ladies, which were once devoted only to me. But, as it had been my rule to treat men according to the rank of their intellect, I had never suffered any one to waste his life in suspense, who could have employed it to better purposes, and had therefore no enemies but coxcombs, whose resentment and respect were equally below my consideration.

The only pain which I have felt from degradation, is the loss of that influence which I had always exerted on the side of virtue, in the defence of innocence, and the assertion of truth. I now find my opinions slighted, my sentiments criticised, and my arguments opposed by those that used to listen to me without reply, and struggle to be first in expressing their conviction.

The female disputants have wholly thrown off my authority; and if I endeavour to enforce my reasons by an appeal to the scholars that happen to be present, the wretches are certain to pay their court by sacrificing me and my system to a finer gown; and I am every hour insulted with contradiction by cowards, who could never find till lately that Melissa was liable to error.

There are two persons only whom I cannot charge with having changed their conduct with my change of fortune. One is an old curate that has passed his life in the duties of his profession, with great reputation for his knowledge and piety; the other is a lieutenant of dragoons. The parson made no difficulty in the height of

my elevation to check me when I was pert, and instruct me when I blundered; and if there is any alteration, he is now more timorous lest his freedom should be thought rudeness. The soldier never paid me any particular addresses, but very rigidly observed all the rules of politeness, which he is now so far from relaxing, that whenever he serves the tea, he obstinately carries me the first dish, in defiance of the frowns and whispers of the table.

This, Mr. Ramhler, is *to see the world.* It is impossible for those that have only known affluence and prosperity, to judge rightly of themselves or others. The rich and the powerful live in a perpetual masquerade, in which all about them wear borrowed characters; and we only discover in what estimation we are held, when we can no longer gives hopes or fears.

I am, &c.

MELISSA.

No. 76.] SATURDAY, DEC. 8, 1750.

——Silvis ubi passim
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,
Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

While mazy error draws mankind astray
From truth's sure path, each takes his devious way?
One to the right, one to the left recedes,
Alike deluded as each fancy leads.

ELPHINSTON.

IT is easy for every man, whatever be his character with others, to find reasons for esteeming himself, and therefore censure, contempt, or conviction of crimes, seldom deprive him of his own favour. Those, indeed, who can see only external facts, may look upon him with abhorrence; but when he calls himself to his own tribunal, he finds every fault, if not absolutely effaced, yet so much palliated by the goodness of his intention, and the cogency of the motive, that very little guilt or turpitude remains; and when he takes a survey of the whole complication of his character, he discovers so many latent excellences, so many virtues that want but an opportunity to exert themselves in act, and so many kind wishes for universal happiness, that he looks on himself as suffering unjustly under the infamy of single failings, while the general temper of his mind is unknown or unregarded.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude; and so willing is every man to flatter himself, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himself zealous in the cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own desires; and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourse to the refinements of speculation, but who yet live at peace with themselves, by means which require less understanding, or less attention. When their hearts are burthened with the consciousness of a crime, instead of seeking for some remedy within themselves, they look round upon the rest of mankind, to find others tainted with the same guilt; they please themselves with observing, that they have numbers on their side; and that, though they are hunted out from the society of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to solitude.

It may be observed, perhaps without exception, that none are so industrious to detect wickedness, or so ready to impute it, as they whose crimes are apparent and confessed. They envy an unblemished reputation, and what they envy they are busy to destroy; they are unwilling to suppose themselves meaner and more corrupt than others, and therefore willingly pull down from their elevations those with whom they cannot rise to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without secret discontent, and according to the different degrees of remaining virtue, or unextinguished reason, he either endeavours to reform himself, or corrupt others; either to regain the station which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his defection.

It has always been considered as an alleviation of misery not to suffer alone, even when union and society can contribute nothing to resistance or escape; some comfort of the same kind seems to incite wickedness to seek associates, though indeed another reason may be given; for as guilt is propagated the power of reproach is diminished, and among numbers equally detestable every individual may be sheltered from shame, though not from conscience.

Another lenitive, by which the throbs of the breast are assuaged, is the contemplation not of the same, but of different crimes. He that cannot justify himself by his resemblance to others, is ready to try some other expedient, and to inquire what will rise to his advantage from opposition and dissimilitude. He easily finds some faults in every human being, which he weighs against his own, and easily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and throws in or takes out at his pleasure circumstances that make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and sets himself at ease, not because he can refute the charges advanced against him, but because he can censure his accusers with equal justice, and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has stored his magazine of malice with weapons equally sharp and equally envenomed.

This practice, though never just, is yet specious and artful, when the censure is directed against deviations to the contrary extreme. The man who is branded with cowardice, may, with some appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument against a stupid contempt of life, and rash precipitation into unnecessary danger. Every recession from temerity is an approach towards cowardice; and though it be confessed that bravery, like other virtues, stands between faults on either hand, yet the place of the middle point may always be disputed; he may therefore often impose upon careless understandings, by turning the attention wholly from himself, and keeping it fixed invariably on the opposite fault; and by showing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time those which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or address for such artful subterfuges; men often ex

tenuate their own guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain rest to themselves, by pointing some other prey to the pursuit of censure.

Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published by those whose interest it is, that the eye and voice of the public should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

All these artifices, and a thousand others equally vain and equally despicable, are incited by that conviction of the deformity of wickedness, from which none can set himself free, and by an absurd desire to separate the cause from the effects, and to enjoy the profit of crimes without suffering the shame. Men are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quiet, and when their understandings are stubborn and uncomplying, raise their passions against them, and hope to overpower their own knowledge.

It is generally not so much the desire of men, sunk into depravity, to deceive the world as themselves; for when no particular circumstances make them dependent on others, infamy disturbs them little, but as it revives their remorse, and is echoed to them from their own hearts. The sentence most dreaded is that of reason and conscience, which they would engage on their side at any price but the labours of duty and the sorrows of repentance. For this purpose every seducement and fallacy is sought, the hopes still rest upon some new experiment till life is at an end; and the last hour steals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in resisting reason, and repressing the sense of the Divine disapprobation.

No. 77.] TUESDAY, DEC. 11, 1750.

Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum, cui sordida monstra
Prætulit, et liquidam temeravit crimine vocem.
PRUDENT.

A golden statue such a wit might claim,
Had God and virtue raised the noble flame;
But ah! how lewd a subject has he sung!
What vile obscenity profanes his tongue
F. LEWIS.

AMONG those whose hopes of distinction, or riches, arise from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an established custom, to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their instructors, and the discouragement which men of genius and study suffer from avarice and ignorance, from the prevalence of false taste, and the encroachment of barbarity.

Men are most powerfully affected by those evils which themselves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of such general felicity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards to which they had, in their own judgment, a just claim, some offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of disappointment, against his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable to learning than any former century, or who does not wish that he had been reserved in the insensibility of non-existence to some happier hour, when literary merit shall no longer be despised, and the gifts and caresses of mankind shall recompense the toils of study, and add lustre to the charms of wit.

Many of these clamours are undoubtedly to be considered only as the bursts of pride never to be satisfied, as the prattle of affectation mimicing distresses unfelt, or as the common-places of vanity solicitous for splendour of sentences and acuteness of remark. Yet it cannot be denied, that frequent discontent must proceed from frequent hardships; and though it is evident, that not more than one age or people can deserve the censure of being more averse from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge must have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, or harassed with persecution.

It is not necessary, however, to join immediately in the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleased with ignorance, or always envious of superior abilities. The miseries of the learned have been related by themselves; and since they have not been found exempt from that partiality with which men look upon their own actions and sufferings, we may conclude that they have not forgotten to deck their cause with the brightest ornaments and strongest colours. The logician collected all his subtilties when they were to be employed in his own defence; and the master of rhetoric exerted against his adversary all the arts by which hatred is embittered, and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cause, is the standing and perpetual rule of distributive justice. Since, therefore, in the controversy between the learned and their enemies, we have only the pleas of one party, of the party more able to delude our understandings, and engage our passions, we must determine our opinion by facts uncontested, and evidences on each side allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the students will find their cause promoted, or their compassion which they expect much increased. Let their conduct be impartially surveyed; let them be allowed no longer to direct attention at their pleasure, by expatiating on their own deserts; let neither the dignity of knowledge overawe the judgment, nor the graces of elegance seduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found, that they were not able to produce claims to kinder treatment, but provoked the calamities which they suffered, and seldom wanted friends, but when they wanted virtue.

That few men, celebrated for theoretic wisdom, live with conformity to their precepts, must be readily confessed; and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind rises with great vehemence against those who neglect the duties which they appear to know with so strong conviction the necessity of performing. Yet since no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the speculatist may not sometimes incur censures too severe, and by those who form ideas of his life from their knowledge of his books, be considered as worse than others, only because he was expected to be better.

He, by whose writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the passions repressed, may be considered as not unprofitable to the great republic of humanity, even though his behaviour should not always exemplify his rules. His instructions may diffuse their influence to re-

gions, in which it will not be inquired, whether the author be *albus an ater*, good or bad; to times, when all his faults and all his follies shall be lost in forgetfulness, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thousands and ten thousands that flame which burnt but dimly in himself, through the fumes of passion or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moralist may be considered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated passions, he extends his radiance further than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only those who make too near approaches.

Yet since good or harm must be received for the most part from those to whom we are familiarly known, he whose vices overpower his virtues, in the compass to which his vices can extend, has no reason to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, when those with whom he passes his life are more corrupted by his practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceases; and his favourers are distant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boast of neglected merit, and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, of whom it cannot be alleged that they have endeavoured to increase the wisdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compositions; have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them. They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments, and stronger allurements.

It has been apparently the settled purpose of some writers, whose powers and acquisitions place them high in the ranks of literature, to set fashion on the side of wickedness; to recommend debauchery and lewdness, by associating them with qualities most likely to dazzle the discernment, and attract the affections; and to show innocence and goodness with such attendant weaknesses as necessarily expose them to contempt and derision.

Such naturally found intimates among the corrupt, the thoughtless, and the intemperate; passed their lives amidst the levities of sportive idleness, or the warm professions of drunken friendship; and fed their hopes with the promises of wretches, whom their precepts had taught to scoff at truth. But when fools had laughed away their sprightliness, and the languors of excess could no longer be relieved, they saw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and stormed to find themselves abandoned. Whether their companions persisted in wickedness, or returned to virtue, they were left equally without assistance; for debauchery is selfish and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is said by Florus of Cataline, who died in the midst of slaughtered enemies, that *his death had been illustrious, had it been suffered for his country.* Of the wits who have languished away life under the pressure of poverty, or in the restlessness of suspense, caressed and rejected, flattered and despised, as they were of more or less use to those who styled themselves their patrons, it might be observed, that their miseries would enforce compassion, had they been brought upon them by honesty and religion.

The wickedness of a loose or profane author is more atrocious than that of the giddy libertine, or drunken ravisher, not only because it extends its effects wider, as a pestilence that taints the air is more destructive than poison infused in a draught, but because it is committed with cool deliberation. By the instantaneous violence of desire, a good man may sometimes be surprised before reflection can come to his rescue; when the appetites have strengthened their influence by habit, they are not easily resisted or suppressed; but for the frigid villany of studious lewdness, for the calm malignity of laboured impiety, what apology can be invented? What punishment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to solitudes for the refinement of debauchery; who tortures his fancy, and ransacks his memory, only that he may leave the world less virtuous than he found it; that he may intercept the hopes of the rising generation; and spread snares for the soul with more dexterity.

What were their motives, or what their excuses, is below the dignity of reason to examine. If having extinguished in themselves the distinction of right and wrong, they were insensible of the mischief which they promoted, they deserved to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of social nature; if influenced by the corruption of patrons, or readers, they sacrificed their own convictions to vanity or interest, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders for pay; since they committed greater crimes without greater temptations.

Of him to whom much is given, much shall be required, Those, whom God has favoured with superior faculties, and made eminent for quickness of intuition, and accuracy of distinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in his eye, for defects and deviations which, in souls less enlightened, may be guiltless. But, surely, none can think without horror on that man's condition, who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from Heaven only to embellish folly and shed lustre upon crimes.

No. 78.] SATURDAY, DEC. 15, 1750.

——*Mors sola fatetur*
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula. JUV.

Death only this mysterious truth unfolds,
The mighty soul how small a body holds. DRYDEN.

CORPORAL sensation is known to depend so much upon novelty, that custom takes away from many things their power of giving pleasure or pain. Thus a new dress becomes easy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to dishes which at first disgusted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden, we lose, in great part, our sensibility of its weight, any man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our ancestors; for he will scarcely believe that men would have had much inclination to marches and battles, encumbered and oppressed, as he will find himself, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that overrun regions, and stormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not

to have been bigger, and has no reason to imagine them stronger, than the present race of men: he therefore must conclude, that their peculiar powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dress of war enabled them to move in it with ease, vigour, and agility.

Yet it seems to be the condition of our present state, that pain should be more fixed and permanent than pleasure. Uneasiness gives way by slow degrees, and is long before it quits its possession of the sensory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and easily dissipated. The fragrance of the jessamine bower is lost after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the Indian wanders among his native spices without any sense of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not necessary to show by many instances what all mankind confess, by an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed.

Something similar, or analogous, may be observed in effects produced immediately upon the mind! nothing can strongly strike or affect us, but what is rare or sudden. The most important events, when they become familiar, are no longer considered with wonder or solicitude, and that which at first filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any other thought, is soon thrust aside into some remote repository of the mind, and lies among other lumber of the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of any impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subjected to choice; we can call them before us, and command their stay, we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is therefore the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness. But this choice is to be made with very little regard to rareness or frequency; for nothing is valuable merely because it is either rare or common, but because it is adapted to some useful purpose, and enables us to supply some deficiency of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father of mankind, as seized with horror and astonishment at the sight of death, exhibited to him on the mount of vision. For surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being; an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know; an immediate and perceptible communication with the Supreme Being, and, what is above all distressful and alarming, the final sentence and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the shortness of life has given frequent occasions of contemplating mortality, can, without emotion, see generations of men pass away, and are at leisure to establish modes of sorrow, and adjust the ceremonial of death. We can look upon funeral pomp as a common spectacle in which we have no concern, and turn away from it to trifles and amusements, without dejection of look, or inquietude of heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the constitution of the world, that there must be a time for other thoughts; and a perpetual meditation upon the last hour, however it may become the solitude of a monastery, is inconsistent with many duties of common life. But surely the remembrance of death ought to predominate in our minds, as an habitual and settled principle, always operating, though not always perceived; and our attention should seldom wander so far from our own condition, as not to be recalled and fixed by sight of an event, which must soon, we know not how soon, happen likewise to ourselves, and of which, though we cannot appoint the time, we may secure the consequence.

Every instance of death may justly awaken our fears and quicken our vigilance, but its frequency so much weakens its effect, that we are seldom alarmed unless some close connexion is broken, some scheme frustrated, or some hope defeated. Many therefore seem to pass on from youth to decrepitude, without any reflection on the end of life, because they are wholly involved within themselves, and look on others only as inhabitants of the common earth, without any expectation of receiving good, or intention of bestowing it.

Events, of which we confess the importance, excite little sensibility, unless they affect us more nearly than as sharers in the common interest of mankind; that desire which every man feels of being remembered and lamented, is often mortified when we remark how little concern is caused by the eternal departure even of those who have passed their lives with public honours, and been distinguished by extraordinary performances. It is not possible to be regarded with tenderness except by a few. That merit which gives greatness and renown, diffuses its influence to a wide compass, but acts weakly on every single breast; it is placed at a distance from common spectators, and shines like one of the remote stars, of which the light reaches us but not the heat. The wit, the hero, the philosopher, whom their tempers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate relations, die, without any other effect than that of adding a new topic to the conversation of the day. They impress none with any fresh conviction of the fragility of our nature, because none had any particular interest in their lives or was united to them by a reciprocation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that those who in their lives were applauded and admired, are laid at last in the ground without the common honour of a stone; because by those excellences with which many were delighted, none had been obliged, and though they had many to celebrate, they had none to love them.

Custom so far regulates the sentiments, at least of common minds, that I believe men may be generally observed to grow less tender as they advance in age. He who, when life was new, melted at the loss of every companion, can look in time, without concern, upon the grave into which his last friend was thrown, and into which

himself is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore is not alarmed so far as to consider how much nearer he approaches to his end. But this is to submit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to suffer our reason to lie useless. Every funeral may justly be considered as a summons to prepare for that state, into which it shows us that we must some time enter; and the summons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is at less distance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege; but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me one of the most striking passages in the visions of Quevedo, which stigmatizes those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. "How" says he, "can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?"

Since business and gayety are always drawing our attention away from a future state, some admonition is frequently necessary to recall it to our minds; and what can more properly renew the impression than the examples of mortality which every day supplies? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die; it will therefore be useful to accustom ourselves, whenever we see a funeral, to consider how soon we may be added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure for ever.

No. 79.] TUESDAY, DEC. 18, 1750.

Tam sæpe nostrum decipi Fabullum, quid
Miraris, Aule? Semper bonus homo tiro est.

MART.

You wonder I've so little wit,
Friend John, so often to be bit.—
None better guard against a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete. F. LEWIS.

SUSPICION, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measures, as a token of depravity and corruption; and a Greek writer of sentences has laid down, as a standing maxim, that *he who believes not another on his oath, knows himself to be perjured.*

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in comparison with something that we know; whoever therefore is overrun with suspicion, and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal, must either have learned by experience or observation the wickedness of mankind, and been taught to avoid fraud by having often suffered or seen treachery, or he must derive his judgment from the consciousness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations which he feels predominant in himself.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life, and observing the arts by which negligence is surprised, timidity overborne, and credulity amused, requires either great latitude of converse and long acquaintance with business, or uncommon activity of vigilance, and acuteness of penetration. When, therefore, a young man, not distinguished by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of scruples and diffidence; makes a bargain with many provisional limitations; hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover; has a long reach in detecting the projects of his acquaintance; considers every caress as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any real tenderness but for himself; whatever expectations this early sagacity may raise of his future eminence or riches I can seldom forbear to consider him as a wretch incapable of generosity or benevolence; as a villain early completed beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this class instruction and admonition are generally thrown away, because they consider artifice and deceit as proofs of understanding; they are misled at the same time by the two great seducers of the world, vanity and interest, and not only look upon those who act with openness and confidence, as condemned by their principles to obscurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowness of comprehension, shortness of views, and slowness of contrivance.

The world has been long amused with the mention of policy in public transactions, and of art in private affairs; they have been considered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level: yet I have not found many performances either of art or policy, that required such stupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falsehood and impudence, without the assistance of any other powers. To profess what he does not mean, to promise what he cannot perform, to flatter ambition with prospects of promotion, and misery with hopes of relief, to soothe pride with appearances of submission, and appease enmity by blandishments and bribes, can surely imply nothing more or greater than a mind devoted wholly to its own purposes, a face that cannot blush, and a heart that cannot feel.

These practices are so mean and base, that he who finds in himself no tendency to use them, cannot easily believe that they are considered by others with less detestation; he therefore suffers himself to slumber in false security, and becomes a prey to those who applaud their own subtilty because they know how to steal upon his sleep, and exult in the success which they could never have obtained, had they not attempted a man better than themselves, who was hindered from obviating their stratagems, not by folly, but by innocence.

Suspicion is, indeed, a temper so uneasy and restless, that it is very justly appointed the concomitant of guilt. It is said, that no torture is equal to the inhibition of sleep long continued; a pain to which the state of that man bears a very exact analogy, who dares never give rest to his vigilance and circumspection, but considers himself as surrounded by secret foes, and fears to entrust his children, or his friend, with the secret that throbs in his breast and the anxieties that break into his face. To avoid, at this expense, those evils to which easiness and friendship might have exposed him, is surely to buy safety at too dear a rate, and, in the language of

the Roman satirist, to save life by losing all for which a wise man would live.*

When in the diet of the German empire, as Camerarius relates, the princes were once displaying their felicity, and each boasting the advantages of his own dominion, one who possessed a country not remarkable for the grandeur of its cities, or the fertility of its soil, rose to speak, and the rest listened between pity and contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories, that he could travel through them without a guard, and if he was weary, sleep in safety upon the lap of the first man whom he should meet; a commendation which would have been ill exchanged for the boast of palaces, pastures, or streams.

Suspicion is not less an enemy to virtue than to happiness; he that is already corrupt is naturally suspicious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once persuaded that deceit will be employed against them, sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well established to give way to example, or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed, by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miseries, and dissembled virtue, in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy, which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that happen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind, when they relate without censure those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction. A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to consent; the strangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place; they return home rich with plunder, and their success is recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and pursue their private advantage by means which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored, and those who have conquered by such treachery may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

* Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

No. 80.] SATURDAY, DEC. 22, 1750.

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte, nec jam sustineant onus
Silvæ laborantes——— HOR.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the labouring woods below. DRYDEN

As Providence has made the human soul an active being always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity, and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours we see the shades lengthen, and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbs different from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age, an exemption from the change of seasons, and a perpetuity of spring; but I am not certain that in this state of imaginary happiness they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we feel, and those which we remember: thus ease after torment is pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated, when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity; but the joy ceases when we have forgot the cold; we must fall below ease again, if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely that however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but valleys enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we should soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languish for want of other subjects, call on Heaven for our

wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompensed for the inconveniences of summer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has its particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the wintry world always fill the beholder with pensive and profound astonishment; as the variety of the scene is lessened, its grandeur is increased; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to visit the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *sullenness against nature*. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with equal disobedience to the voice of nature, who looks on the bleak hills and leafless woods, without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gayety, and winter of terror; in spring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of happiness and plenty. In the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heaviness and sorrow, nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual sympathy and tenderness, which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter therefore is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestic merriment and gayety. We are seldom invited by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose, than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so effectually laid asleep, as by some common calamity: an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same fire-side, those, who by the opposition of inclinations, or difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of the social season, with all its bleakness and all its severities.

To the men of study and imagination the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind and concentration of ideas; and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time, in which those whom literature enables to find amusements for themselves, have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subjects of inquiry, and preserve themselves from that weariness, which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philosophers; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life; minute, indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependent on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profusion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us, without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet none should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue, or pass without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of those which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation, without being able, when we rise from it, to please ourselves with having given or received some advantages; but a man may shuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon to midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than his gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of agitated passions and clamorous alterations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers, who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them, may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those gratifications of which the pleasure is most durable.

No. 81.] TUESDAY, DEC. 16, 1750.

Discite Justitiam moniti—— VIRG

Hear, and be just.

AMONG questions which have been discussed, without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency, or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement, and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as

they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate without inconvenience; so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need: for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind; and controversies, merely speculative, are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the Divine Author of our religion it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us, in our transactions with others, is remarkarkably clear and comprehensive: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.* A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law, of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention, and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have inquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be such as we approve. and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others, which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of conscience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the supplicant he should desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the public safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and, apparently, does to others what he would not that others should do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which regard the great republic of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion, which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those by whom this great rule has been commented and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, *debts of justice*, and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this precept is to establish a rule of justice; and I know not whether invention, or sophistry, can start a single difficulty to retard its application, when it is thus expressed and explained, *let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.*

The discharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumstances, and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the Divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to its single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality, according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule therefore is not equally determinate and absolute, with respect to offices of kindness, and acts of liberality; because liberality and kindness, absolutely determined, would lose their nature; for how could we be called tender, or charitable, for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet, even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer for want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature will scarcely suffer a man groaning under the pressure of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough till his deliverance is completed; not therefore what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant, since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But in all inquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not oppressed with superstitious fears to

determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from deficiency, by doing more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he should expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he now will prevail upon himself to perform; and when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety.

No. 82.] Saturday, Dec. 29, 1750.

Omnia Castor emit, sic fiet ut omnia vendat. MART.

Who buys without discretion, buys to sell.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

It will not be necessary to solicit your good-will by any formal preface, when I have informed you, that I have long been known as the most laborious and zealous virtuoso that the present age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniences have been brought upon me by an unextinguishable ardour of curiosity, and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the productions of art and nature.

It was observed, from my entrance into the world, that I had something uncommon in my disposition, and that there appeared in me very early tokens of superior genius. I was always an enemy to trifles; the playthings which my mother bestowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might discover the method of their structure, and the causes of their motions: of all the toys with which children are delighted I valued only my coral, and as soon as I could speak, asked like Pieresc, innumerable questions, which the maids about me could not resolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and serious, and instead of amusing myself with puerile diversions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked in the fields without bringing home stones of remarkable forms, or insects of some uncommon species. I never entered an old house, from which I did not take away the painted glass, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demolished the convents and monasteries, and broke windows by law.

Being thus early possessed by a taste for solid knowledge, I passed my youth with very little disturbance from passions and appetites; and having no pleasure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of plays, politics, fashions, or love, I carried on my inquiries with incessant diligence, and had amassed more stones, mosses, and shells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greatest part of young men are studying under tutors, or endeavouring to recommend themselves to notice by their dress, their air, and their levities.

When I was two-and-twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, possessed of a small estate in land, with a very large sum of money in the public funds, and must confess that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wise. He once fretted at the expense of only ten shillings, which he happened to overhear me offering for the sting of a hornet, though it was a cold moist summer, in which very few hornets had been seen. He often recommended to me the study of physic, in which, said he, you may at once gratify your curiosity after natural history, and increase your fortune by benefiting mankind. I heard him, Mr. Rambler, with pity, and, as there was no prospect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, suffered him to please himself with hoping that I should some time follow his advice. For you know that there are men with whom, when they have once settled a notion in their heads, it is to very little purpose to dispute.

Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very soon enlarged the bounds of my curiosity, and contented myself no longer with such rarities as required only judgment and industry, and when once found, might be had for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to exotics and antiques, and became so well known for my generous patronage of ingenious men, that my levee was crowded with visitants; some to see my museum, and others to increase its treasures, by selling me whatever they had brought from other countries

I had always a contempt for that narrowness of conception, which contents itself with cultivating some single corner of the field of science, I took the whole region into my view, and wished it of yet greater extent. But no man's power can be equal to his will. I was forced to proceed by slow degrees, and to purchase what chance or kindness happened to present. I did not however proceed without some design, or imitate the indiscretion of those who begin a thousand collections, and finish none. Having been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the rude and barbarous times, before any regular surveys, or just observations; and have, at a great expense, brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down according to its true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errors of the ancient geographers may be amply informed.

But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; and as Alfred received the tribute of the Welsh in wolves' heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals, and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects, which land, air, or water, can supply. I have three species of earth-worms not known to the naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and can show four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record, and once accepted, as a half year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only two horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size; and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears, when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way, for which he was not only forgiven, but rewarded.

These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at small expense; nor should I have ventured to rank myself among the virtuosi without better claims. I have suffered nothing worthy the regard of a wise man to escape my notice: I

have ransacked the old and the new world, and been equally attentive to past ages and the present. For the illustration of ancient history, I can show a marble, of which the inscription, though it is not now legible, appears from some broken remains of the letters, to have been Tuscan, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of Rome. I have two pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of Ephesus, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of Persepolis; a piece of stone which paved the Areopagus of Athens, and a plate without figures or characters, which was found at Corinth, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have sand gathered out of the Granicus; a fragment of Trajan's bridge over the Danube; some of the mortar which cemented the watercourse of Tarquin; a horse-shoe broken on the Flaminian way; and a turf with five daisies dug from the field of Pharsalia.

I do not wish to raise the envy of unsuccessful collectors, by too pompous a display of my scientific wealth, but cannot forbear to observe, that there are few regions of the globe which are not honoured with some memorial in my cabinets. The Persian monarchs are said to have boasted the greatness of their empire, by being served at their tables with drink from the Ganges and the Danube; I can show one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of Caucasus, and another that contains what once was snow on the top of Atlas; in a third is dew brushed from a banana in the gardens of Ispahan; and, in another, brine that has rolled in the Pacific ocean. I flatter myself that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China; a humming bird which an American princess wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the Queen of Siam; the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the great Mogul; a riband that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana; and a scimitar once wielded by a soldier of Abas the Great.

In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to choose only by intrinsic worth, and real usefulness, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak; and keep in the same drawers, sand scraped from the coffin of King Richard, and a commission signed by Henry the Seventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth, and the shoe of Mary of Scotland; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of King James. I have paid the same price for the glove of Lewis, and a thimble of Queen Mary; for a fur cap of the Czar, and, a boot of Charles of Sweden.

You will easily imagine that these accumulations were not made without some diminution of my fortune; for I was so well known to spare no cost, that at every sale some bid against me for hire, some for sport, and some for malice; and if I asked the price of any thing, it was sufficient to double the demand. For curiosity, trafficing thus with avarice, the wealth of India had not been enough; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my closet: here I was inclined to stop, and live upon my estate in literary leisure, but the sale of the Harleian Collection shook my resolution; I mortgaged my land, and purchased thirty medals, which I could never find before. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has seized my repository I am therefore condemned to disperse what the labour of an age will not reassemble. I submit to that which cannot be opposed, and shall, in a short time, declare a sale. I have, while it is yet in my power, sent you a pebble, picked up by Tavernier on the banks of the Ganges; for which I desire no other recompense than that you will recommend my catalogue to the public.

QUISQUILIUS.

No. 83.] TUESDAY, JAN. 1, 1751.

Nisi utile est quod facias, stulta est gloria. PHÆD.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of that thirst after curiosities, which often draws contempt and ridicule upon itself, but which is perhaps no otherwise blameable, than as it wants those circumstantial recommendations which add lustre even to moral excellences, and are absolutely necessary to the grace and beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority on those who possess it, that they might probably have escaped all censures had they been able to agree among themselves; but as envy and competition have divided the republic of letters into factions, they have neglected the common interest; each has called in foreign aid, and endeavoured to strengthen his own cause by the frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and the clamour of popularity. They have all engaged in feuds, till by mutual hostilities they demolished those outworks which veneration had raised for their security, and exposed themselves to barbarians, by whom every region of science is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and professions, may be observed a constant reciprocation of reproaches. The collector of shells and stones derides the folly of him who pastes leaves and flowers upon paper, pleases himself with colours that are perceptibly fading, and amasses with care what cannot be preserved. The hunter of insects stands amazed that any man can waste his short time upon lifeless matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their history. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own study, but to exclude all others from regard, and having heated his imagination with some favourite pursuit, wonders that the rest of mankind are not seized with same passion.

There are, indeed, many subjects of study which seem but remotely allied to useful knowledge, and of little importance to happiness or virtue; nor is it easy to forbear some sallies of merriment, or expressions of pity, when we see a man wrinkled with attention, and emaciated with solicitude, in the investigation of questions, of which, without visible inconvenience, the world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dangerous to discourage well-intended labours or innocent cu-

riosity; for he who is employed in searches, which by any deduction of consequences tend to the benefit of life, is surely laudable, in comparison of those who spend their time in counteracting happiness, and filling the world with wrong and danger, confusion and remorse. No man can perform so little as not to have reason to congratulate himself on his merits, when he beholds the multitudes that live in total idleness, and have never yet endeavoured to be useful.

It is impossible to determine the limits of inquiry, or to foresee what consequences a new discovery may produce. He who suffers not his faculties to lie torpid, has a chance, whatever be his employment, of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The man that first ranged the woods in search of medicinal springs, or climbed the mountains for salutary plants, has undoubtedly merited the gratitude of posterity, how much soever his frequent miscarriages might excite the scorn of his contemporaries. If what appears little be universally despised, nothing greater can be attained; for all that is great was at first little, and rose to its present bulk by gradual accessions, and accumulated labours.

Those who lay out time or money in assembling matter for contemplation, are doubtless entitled to some degree of respect, though in a flight of gayety, it be easy to ridicule their treasure, or in a fit of sullenness to despise it. A man who thinks only on the particular object before him, goes not away much illuminated by having enjoyed the privilege of handling the tooth of a shark, or the paw of a white bear; yet there is nothing more worthy of admiration to a philosophical eye than the structure of animals, by which they are qualified to support life in the elements or climates to which they are appropriated; and of all natural bodies, it must be generally confessed that they exhibit evidences of infinite wisdom, bear their testimony to the supreme reason, and excite in the mind new raptures of gratitude and new incentives to piety.

To collect the productions of art, and examples of mechanical science or manual ability, is unquestionably useful, even when the things themselves are of small importance, because it is always advantageous to know how far the human powers have proceeded, and how much experience has found to be within the reach of diligence. Idleness and timidity often despair without being overcome, and forbear attempts for fear of being defeated; and we may promote the invigoration of faint endeavours, by showing what has been already performed. It may sometimes happen that the greatest efforts of ingenuity have been exerted in trifles; yet the same principles and expedients may be applied to more valuable purposes, and the movements, which put into action machines of no use but to raise the wonder of ignorance, may be employed to drain fens, or manufacture metals, to assist the architect, or preserve the sailor.

For the utensils, arms, or dresses of foreign nations, which make the greatest part of many collections, I have little regard, when they are valued only because they are foreign, and can suggest no improvement of our own practice. Yet they are not all equally useless, nor can it be always safely determined which should be rejected or retained: for they may sometimes unexpectedly contribute to the illustration of history, and to the knowledge of the natural commodities of the country, or of the genius and customs of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor satisfy any rational desire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of some eminent person, as the armour of King Henry; or for having been used on some remarkable occasion, as the lantern of Guy Faux. The loss or preservation of these seems to be a thing indifferent, nor can I perceive why the possession of them should be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curiosity is implanted by nature; and, when I find Tully confessing of himself, that he could not forbear at Athens to visit the walks and houses which the old philosophers had frequented or inhabited, and recollect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried,* I am afraid to declare against the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meanest relic of a man great and illustrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to expect the same renown, if it be sought by the same virtues.

The virtuoso, therefore, cannot be said to be wholly useless; but perhaps he may be sometimes culpable, for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing, in petty speculations, those hours by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is never without grief that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enlisting himself in this secondary class of learning; for when he has once discovered a method of gratifying his desire of eminence by expense rather than by labour, and known the sweets of a life blessed at once with the ease of idleness, and the reputation of knowledge, he will not easily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles; arguments which require circumspection and vigilance, and principles which cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly shut himself up for ever with his shells and metals, like the companions of Ulysses, who, having tasted the fruit of Lotos, would not, even by the hope of seeing their own country, be tempted again to the dangers of the sea.

Ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ βούλοντο μετ' ἄνδρασι Λωτοφάγοισι,
Λωτὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι μένεμεν, νόστου τε λάθεσθαι.

——Whoso tastes,
Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts;
Nor other home nor other care intends,
But quits his house, his country, and his friends
POPE.

Collections of this kind are of use to the learned, as heaps of stones and piles of timber are necessary to the architect. But to dig the quarry or to search the field, requires not much of any quality beyond stubborn perseverance; and

* See this sentiment illustrated by a most splendid passage in Dr. Johnson's "Journey to the Western Islands," vol. viii. p. 395-6.—C.

though genius must often lie inactive without this humble assistance, yet this can claim little praise, because every man can afford it.

To mean understandings, it is sufficient honour to be numbered amongst the lowest labourers of learning; but different abilities must find different tasks. To hew stone would have been unworthy of Palladio; and to have rambled in search of shells and flowers, had but ill suited with the capacity of Newton.

No. 84.] SATURDAY, JAN. 5, 1751.

Cunarum fueras motor, Charideme, mearum,
Et pueri custos, assiduusque comes.
Jam mihi nigrescunt tonsa sudaria barba,——
Sed tibi non crevi: te noster villicus horret:
Te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet.
Corripis, observas, quereris, suspiria ducis,
Ei vix a ferulis abstinet ira manum. MART.

You rock'd my cradle, were my guide
In youth, still tending at my side:
But now, dear Sir, my beard is grown,
Still I'm a child to thee alone.
Our steward, butler, cook, and all
You fright, nay even the very wall;
You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,
And scarce will lay the rod aside. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You seem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world; I shall therefore lay my case before you, and hope by your decision to be set free from unreasonable restraints, and enabled to justify myself against the accusations which spite and peevishness produce against me.

At the age of five years I lost my mother, and my father, being not qualified to superintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his sister, who instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny her what she may justly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated sentiments or extensive views, but her principles were good and her intentions pure; and though some may practise more virtues, scarce any commit fewer faults.

Under this good lady, I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and standing maxims of domestic prudence; and might have grown up by degrees to a country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of ranging beyond the neighbourhood, had not Flavia come down, last summer, to visit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of course, to compliment the stranger, and was, at the first sight, surprised at the unconcern with which she saw herself gazed at by the company whom she had never known before; at the carelessness with which she received compliments, and the readiness with which she returned them. I found she had something which I perceived myself to want, and could not but wish to be like her, at once easy and officious, attentive and unembarrassed. I went home, and for four days could think and talk of nothing but Miss Flavia: though my aunt told me that she was a forward flirt, and thought herself wise before her time.

In a little time she repaid my visit, and raised in my heart a new confusion of love and admiration. I soon saw her again, and still found new charms in her air, conversation, and behaviour. You, who have perhaps seen the world, may have observed, that formality soon ceases between young persons. I know not how others are affected on such occasions, but I found myself irresistibly allured to friendship and intimacy, by the familiar complaisance and airy gayety of Flavia; so that in a few weeks I became her favourite, and all the time was passed with me, that she could gain from ceremony and visit.

As she came often to me, she necessarily spent some hours with my aunt, to whom she paid great respect by low courtesies, submissive compliance, and soft acquiescence; but as I became gradually more accustomed to her manners, I discovered that her civility was general; that there was a certain degree of deference shown by her to circumstances and appearances; that many went away flattered by her humility, whom she despised in her heart; that the influence of far the greatest part of those with whom she conversed, ceased with their presence; and that sometimes she did not remember the names of them, whom, without any intentional insincerity or false commendation, her habitual civility had sent away with very high thoughts of their own importance.

It was not long before I perceived, that my aunt's opinion was not of much weight in Flavia's deliberations, and that she was looked upon by her as a woman of narrow sentiments, without knowledge of books, or observations on mankind. I had hitherto considered my aunt, as entitled by her wisdom and experience to the highest reverence, and could not forbear to wonder that any one so much younger should venture to suspect her of error or ignorance; but my surprise was without uneasiness, and being now accustomed to think Flavia always in the right, I readily learned from her to trust my own reason, and to believe it possible, that they who had lived longer might be mistaken.

Flavia had read much, and used so often to converse on subjects of learning, that she put all the men in the country to flight, except the old parson, who declared himself much delighted with her company, because she gave him opportunities to recollect the studies of his younger years, and, by some mention of ancient story, had made him rub the dust off his Homer, which had laid unregarded in his closet. With Homer, and a thousand other names familiar to Flavia, I had no acquaintance, but began by comparing her accomplishments with my own, to repine at my education, and wish that I had not been so long confined to the company of those from whom nothing but housewifery was to be learned. I then set myself to peruse such books as Flavia recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I saw new worlds hourly bursting upon my mind, and was enraptured at the prospect of diversifying life with endless entertainment.

The old lady finding that a large screen, which I had undertaken to adorn with Turkey-work against winter, made very slow advances, and that I had added in two months but three leaves to a flowered apron then in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of honest folly exclaimed against my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head with books. But she had now lost her authority

for I began to find innumerable mistakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought myself no longer bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy, and who professed to think that nothing more is required of a woman than to see that the house is clean, and that the maids go to bed, and rise at a certain hour.

She seemed however to look upon Flavia as seducing me, and to imagine that when her influence was withdrawn, I should return to my allegiance, she therefore contented herself with remote hints, and gentle admonitions, intermixed with sage histories of the miscarriages of wit, and disappointments of pride. But since she has found, that though Flavia is departed, I still persist in my new scheme, she has at length, lost her patience, she snatches my book out of my hand, tears my paper if she finds me writing, burns Flavia's letters before my face when she can seize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverseness. If women, she says, would but know their duty and their interest, they would be careful to acquaint themselves with family affairs, and many a penny might be saved; for while the mistress of the house is scribbling and reading, servants are junketing, and linen is wearing out. She then takes me round the rooms, shows me the worked hangings, and chairs of tent-stitch, and asks, whether all this was done with a pen and a book?

I cannot deny that I sometimes laugh and sometimes am sullen; but she has not delicacy enough to be much moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if she did not think the interest of the family endangered by this change of my manners. She had for some years marked out young Mr. Surly, an heir in the neighbourhood, remarkable for his love of fighting-cocks, as an advantageous match; and was extremely pleased with the civilities which he used to pay me, till under Flavia's tuition I learned to talk of subjects which he could not understand. This, she says, is the consequence of female study; girls grow too wise to be advised, and too stubborn to be commanded; but she is resolved to try who shall govern, and will thwart my humour till she breaks my spirit.

These menaces, Mr. Rambler, sometimes make me quite angry; for I have been sixteen these ten weeks, and think myself exempted from the dominion of a governess, who has no pretensions to more sense or knowledge than myself. I am resolved, since I am as tall and as wise as other women, to be no longer treated like a girl. Miss Flavia has often told me, that ladies of my age go to assemblies and routes, without their mothers and their aunts; I shall, therefore, from this time, leave asking advice, and refuse to give accounts. I wish you would state the time at which young ladies may judge for themselves, which I am sure you cannot but think ought to begin before sixteen; if you are inclined to delay it longer, I shall have very little regard to your opinion.

My aunt often tells me of the advantages of experience, and of the deference due to seniority; and both she and all the antiquated part of the world, talk of the unreserved obedience which they paid to the commands of their parents, and the undoubting confidence with which they listened to their precepts; of the terrors which they felt at a frown, and the humility with which they supplicated forgiveness whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy that this boast is too general to be true, and that the young and old were always at variance. I have, however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever she will prove to be wrong; but she replies that she has reasons of her own, and that she is sorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to ask for proofs.

I beg once again, Mr. Rambler, to know whether I am not as wise as my aunt, and whether, when she presumes to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up a spirit and return her insolence? I shall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

MYRTILLA.

P. S. Remember I am past sixteen.

No. 85.] TUESDAY, JAN. 8, 1751.

Olïa si tollas periere Cupidinis arcus
Contemptæque jacent, et sine luce faces.—OVID.

At busy hearts in vain Love's arrows fly;
Dimm'd, scorn'd, and impotent, his torches lie.

MANY writers of eminence in physic have laid out their diligence upon the consideration of those distempers to which men are exposed by particular states of life, and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical inquiries, and medical refinements, would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabric of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind, who, for the preservation of health, in those whose rank or wealth exempts them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those who practise them, and differing only from the drudgery of the husbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early; pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chase, swims rivers, and scales precipices, till he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has perhaps sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death; yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit nor honour to expect from his perils and his conquests, but toils without the hope of mural or civic garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much

misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the utmost that can be hoped from a sedentary, and inactive habit; case, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprise, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain; and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that in effect, the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that, as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but, while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death indeed falls from heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct; to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.*

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind, and body should both be kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expense of that health, which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students, to despise those amusements and recreations, which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as are necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pressing and immediate, when he knows that his awkwardness must make him ridiculous.

Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis
Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive, quiescit,
Ne spissæ risum tollant impune coronæ. HOR.

He that's unskilful will not toss a ball.
Nor run, nor wrestle, for he fears the fall;
He justly fears to meet deserved disgrace,
And that the ring will hiss the baffled ass. CREECH.

*This passage was once strangely supposed by some readers to recommend suicide, instead of exercise, which is surely the more obvious meaning. See, however, a letter from Dr. Johnson on the subject, in "Boswell's Life," vol. iv. p. 162.—C

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness.

It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his "System of Education," urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions, that when the mind is weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation; and that while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that vagrance and dissipation by which it relieves itself after a long intenseness of thought, unless some allurement be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to inquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation, and degenerate ambition, and whether if our divines and physicians were taught the lathe and the chisel, they would not think more of their tools than their books? as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleased with little things; but what is there which may not be perverted? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours, which a manual occupation appears to engross; let us compute the profit with the loss, and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise that perhaps by the same attractions he is sometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted, for having contrived, that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of recluse and domestic leisure may be filled up. These arts are more necessary, as the weakness of their sex, and the general system of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps the most powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confusion and slaughter that would be produced by so many piercing eyes and vivid understandings, turned loose upon mankind, with no other business than to sparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to destroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensnarers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed;

and Hector in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrors, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetic principle, that *Nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that disturb his life and contaminate his conscience, from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has lived with little observation either on himself or others, who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

No. 86.] SATURDAY, JAN. 12, 1751.

Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus et aure.
HOR.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan.
ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burden of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it, and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, "that he had heard the nightingale herself;" and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is, that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon "Paradise Lost," and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the commonwealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter ora arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topics of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with what minute attention the ancient critics considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal; but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore studiously decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language already in use was insufficient. If, therefore, I shall sometimes seem obscure, it may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroic measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
But who can bear th' approach of certain fate.
DRYDEN.

Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared. MILTON.

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has therefore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed; this, though it always injures the harmony of the line, considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances, and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the music.

Thus at their shady lodge arrived both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
For us too large; where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground;
But thou hast promised from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In this passage it will be at first observed that all the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to the accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong. As

Thus at their shady lodge arrived, *both stood*,
Both turn'd, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, *air*, *earth*, and heaven.

In others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but upon both weak.

———a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness in*finite*, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any unpleasing diminution of harmony, as may be observed in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this,

———Thou also mads't the night,
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the invention or knowledge of Milton, has more need to allure his audience by musical cadences, should seldom suffer more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious:

———This delicious place,
For us too large; *where thy* abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropp'd *falls to* the ground.

Here the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth pair in the second verse, have their accents retrograde or inverted; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where the vicious verse concludes a period, and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently studious of harmony, has committed the same fault.

———his harmless life
Does with substantial blessedness abound,
And the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other; as Milton expresses in his sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the *Iambic*, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroic measure is derived, and the *Trochaic*, consisting in a like alteration of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

No. 87.] TUESDAY, JAN. 15, 1751.

Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,
Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem.
HOR

The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
The wretch of sloth, its excellence shall prove;
Fierceness itself shall hear its rage away,
When listening calmly to th' instructive lay.
FRANCIS.

THAT few things are so liberally bestowed, or squandered with so little effect, as good advice, has been generally observed; and many sage positions have been advanced concerning the reasons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is indeed an important and noble inquiry, for little would be wanting to the happiness of life, if every man could conform to the right as soon as he was shown it.

This perverse neglect of the most salutary precepts, and stubborn resistance of the most pathetic persuasion, is usually imputed to him by whom the counsel is received, and we often hear it mentioned as a sign of hopeless depravity, that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themselves to have quicker sagacity and deeper penetration, have found out that the inefficacy of advice is usually the fault of the counsellor, and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be successfully performed: we are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of

truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise *the cathartics of the soul.*

But, notwithstanding this specious expedient, we find the world yet in the same state: advice is still given, but still received with disgust; nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated, or its power increased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence and inculcated with importunity, but failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another, as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most diligently, whose superiority either of power or understanding may entitle them to inspect our lives; it is therefore very probable that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual maladies, mistakes their cause; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of superiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is most necessary or most judicious. But for the same reason every one is eager to instruct his neighbours. To be wise or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price; but when nothing is necessary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is so insensible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

> ——*Tentonda via est, qua me quoque possim*
> *Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.*
> VIRG.
>
> New ways I must attempt, my grovelling name
> To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.
> DRYDEN.

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it without any very accurate inquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes, at our expense, and assumes authority over us without our permission; for many would contentedly suffer the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It is, indeed, seldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of all human good so powerfully enforces; and therefore the adviser may justly suspect, that he has inflamed the opposition which he laments by arrogance and superciliousness. He may suspect, but needs not hastily to condemn himself, for he can rarely be certain that the softest language or most humble diffidence would have escaped resentment; since scarcely any degree of circumspection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful, the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied; and there are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great; but there are few so free from vanity, as not to dictate to those who will hear their instructions with a visible sense of their own beneficence: and few to whom it is not unpleasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupilage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of Alphonsus of Arragon, that *dead counsellors are safest.* The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which occur in oral conferences, are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his service unasked, nor can be often suspected of any malignant intention to insult his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passions, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality, but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

We see that volumes may be perused, and perused with attention, to little effect; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue, may be treasured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that pass their lives among books, very few read to be made wiser or better, apply any general reproof of vice to themselves, or try their own manners by axioms of justice. They purpose either to consume those hours for which they can find no other amusement, to gain or preserve that respect which learning has always obtained; or to gratify their curiosity with knowledge, which, like treasures buried and forgotten, is of no use to others or themselves.

"The preacher (says a French author) may spend an hour in explaining and enforcing a precept of religion, without feeling any impression from his own performance, because he may have no further design than to fill up his hour." A student may easily exhaust his life in comparing divines and moralists, without any practical regard to morality or religion; he may be learning not to live, but to reason; he may regard only the elegance of style, justness of argument, and accuracy of method; and may enable himself to criticise with judgment, and dispute with subtility, while the chief use of his volumes is unthought

of, his mind is unaffected, and his life is unreformed.

But though truth and virtue are thus frequently defeated by pride, obstinacy or folly, we are not allowed to desert them; for whoever can furnish arms which they hitherto have not employed, may enable them to gain some hearts which would have resisted any other method of attack. Every man of genius has some arts of fixing the attention peculiar to himself, by which, honestly exerted, he may benefit mankind; for the arguments for purity of life fail of their due influence, not because they have been considered and confuted, but because they have been passed over without consideration. To the position of Tully, that if Virtue could be seen, she must be loved, may be added, that if Truth could be heard, she must be obeyed.

No. 88.] SATURDAY, JAN. 19, 1751.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti:
Audebit, quæcunque minus splendoris habebunt,
Et sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba Movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ. HOR.

But he that hath a curious piece design'd,
When he begins must take a censor's mind,
Severe and honest; and what words appear
Too light and trivial, or too weak to bear
The weighty sense, nor worth the reader's care,
Shake off; though stubborn, they are loath to move,
And though we fancy, dearly though we love.—CREECH.

"THERE is no reputation for genius," says Quintilian, "to be gained by writing on things, which, however necessary, have little splendour or show. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet since there is not any way to the top of science, but from the lowest parts, I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator."

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent, I shall continue my inquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however minute the employment may appear, of analysing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses, it is certain, that without this petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall on its proper place, but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and, by consequence the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our monosyllables being of Teutonic original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

——Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived by attending to the following passages:

Immortal *Amarant*—there grows
And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;
With these that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations:

——Under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

——Here in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve first deck'd her nuptial bed;
And heavenly choirs the hymenean sung.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed, not only to the music of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry, seems fully convinced of the unfitness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance: for this reason, and I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but music to his poem.

——The richer seat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Gerion's sons
Call El Dorado——

The moon—The Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands.——

He has indeed been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As

——Knowledge
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This license, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on "Paradise

Lost" have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it.* But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French; and the clision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e*, which our ancestors added to the most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary, to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be censured; in some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be safely imitated. The abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is strongly sounded, and makes, with its associate consonant, a full and audible syllable.

——What he gives,
Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike these pure
Intelligential substances require.

Fruits,—Hesperian fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.

——Evening now approach'd,
For we have *also* our evening and our morn.

Of guests he makes them slaves,
Inhospit*ably*, and kills their infant males.

And vital Vir*tue* infused, and vital warmth,
Throughout the fluid mass.——

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him.

I believe every reader will agree, that in all those passages, though not equally in all, the music is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other lines in which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and therefore such compliance with the measure may be allowed.

——Nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abomina*ble*, inutter*able*; and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd——

——From the shore
They view'd the vast immeasur*able* abyss,
Impenetr*able*, impal'd with circling fire.

To none communic*able* in earth or heaven.

Yet even these contractions increase the roughness of a language too rough already; and though in long poems they may be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

* In the original Rambler, in folio, our author's opinion appears different, and is thus expressed:—"This license, though an innovation in English poetry, is yet allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on 'Paradise Lost' have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for introducing it."

Milton frequently uses in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables

——Thus it shall befall
Him whom to worth in woman over-trust*ing*
Lets her will rule.——

I also err'd in over-much admir*ing*.

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but, though they are not unpleasing or dissonant, they ought to be admitted into heroic poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epic and tragic measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramatic lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

No. 89.] TUESDAY, JAN. 22, 1751.

Dulce est desipere in loco. HOR.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgotten.

LOCKE, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced, that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend a whole life in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exacters of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, many of the few moments allotted us will slide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break, from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time; and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any abstruse question, he will find his faculties continually stealing away to more pleasing entertainments. He often perceives himself transported, he knows not how, to distant tracts of thought, and returns to his first object as from a dream, without knowing when he forsook it, or how long he has been abstracted from it.

It has been observed that the most studious are not always the most learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in discovering that this difference of proficiency may arise from the difference of intellectual powers, of the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewise frequently happens that the most recluse are not the most vigorous prosecutors of study. Many impose upon the world, and many upon themselves by an appearance of severe and exemplary diligence, when they, in reality, give themselves up to the luxury of fancy, please their minds with regulating the past, or planning out the future; place themselves at will in varied situations of happiness, and slumber away their days in voluntary visions. In the journey of life some are left behind because they are naturally feeble and slow: some because they miss the way, and many because they leave it by choice, and, instead of pressing onward with a steady pace, delight themselves with momentary deviations, turn aside to pluck every flower, and repose in every shade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whose business is to think, than to have learned the art of regaling his mind with those airy gratifications. Other vices or follies are restrained by fear, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the comparison of our conduct with that of others may in time produce. But this invisible riot of the mind, this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy; new worlds rise up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long succession of delights dances round him. He is at last called back to life by nature, or by custom, and enters peevish into society, because he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excursions with the asperity, though not with the knowledge, of a student, and hastens again to the same felicity with the eagerness of a man bent upon the advancement of some favourite science. The infatuation strengthens by degrees, and, like the poison of opiates, weakens his powers, without any external symptom of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that these hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by disgrace and disappointment of the difference between the labour of thought, and the sport of musing. But this discovery is often not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thousand accidents may indeed, awaken drones to a more early sense of their danger and their shame. But they who are convinced of the necessity of breaking from this habitual drowsiness, too often relapse in spite of their resolution; for these ideal seducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is necessary to their influence; they invade the soul without warning, and have often charmed down resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the stoic precept, teach his desires to fix upon eternal things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication.

It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure of this mental malady, by close application to some new study, which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curiosity in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude, and solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too much accustomed to sink into themselves. Active employment or public pleasure is generally a necessary part of this intellectual regimen, without which, though some remission may be obtained, a complete cure will scarcely be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radicated by time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of reason and of virtue. Its slightest attacks therefore, should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the frigid and narcotic infection beginning to seize him, should turn his whole attention against it, and check it at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that no part of life be spent in a state of neutrality or indifference; but that some pleasure be found for every moment that is not devoted to labour; and that, whenever the necessary business of life grows irksome or disgusting, an immediate transition be made to diversion and gayety.

After the exercises which the health of the body requires, and which have themselves a natural tendency to actuate and invigorate the mind, the most eligible amusement of a rational being seems to be that interchange of thoughts which is practised in free and easy conversation; where suspicion is banished by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to offend, and hears with no other disposition than desire to be pleased.

There must be a time in which every man trifles; and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle in company or alone. To join profit with pleasure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that our amusements should not terminate wholly in the present moment, but contribute more or less to future advantage. He that amuses himself among well chosen companions, can scarcely fail to receive, from the most careless and obstreperous merriment which virtue can allow, some useful hints; nor can converse on the most familiar topics, without some casual information. The loose sparkles of thoughtless wit may give new light to the mind, and the gay contention for paradoxical positions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which those friendships that give happiness or consolation, relief or security, are generally formed. A wise and good man is never so amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroic generosity, or philosophical discoveries, may compel veneration and respect, but love always implies some kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only to be excited by that levity and cheerfulness which disencumber all minds from awe and solitude, invite the modest to freedom, and exalt the timorous to confidence. This easy gayety is certain to please, whatever be the character of him that exerts it; if our superiors descend from their elevation, we love them for lessening the distance at which we are placed below them; and inferiors, from whom we can receive no lasting advantage, will always keep our affections while their sprightliness and mirth contribute to our pleasure.

Every man finds himself differently affected by the sight of fortresses of war, and palaces of pleasure; we look on the height and strength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, for we cannot think of defence without admitting images of danger; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace, because nothing is impressed by them on the mind but joy and festivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters; with protectors we are safe, with companions we are happy.

No. 90.] SATURDAY, JAN. 26, 1751.

In tenui labor. VIRG.

What toil in slender things!

IT is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extensive comprehension, is to common understandings of little use. They who undertake these subjects are therefore always in danger, as one or other inconvenience arises to their imagination, of frighting us with rugged science, or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is, indeed, opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses with which he has diversified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compensated by the examples, and the irksomeness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated. Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, whom he proposed to himself for his models, so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit the imitation. There are indeed many inconveniences inseparable from our heroic measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil; inconveniences, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable; but against which he has struggled with so much art and diligence, that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so melodiously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyric measures are formed from the fragments of the heroic. It is, indeed, scarce possible to break them in such a manner, but that *invenias etiam disjecta membra poetæ*, some harmony will still remain, and the due proportions of sound will always be discovered. This measure therefore allowed great variety of pauses, and great liberties of connecting one verse with another, because wherever the line was interrupted, either part singly was musical. But the ancients seem to have confined this privilege to hexameters; for in their other measures, though longer than the English heroic, those who wrote after the refinements of versification, venture so seldom to change their pauses, that every variation may be supposed rather a compliance with necessity than the choice of judgment.

Milton was constrained within the narrow limits of a measure not very harmonious in the utmost perfection; the single parts, therefore, into which it was to be sometimes broken by pauses, were in danger of losing the very form of verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding all his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, no part of a verse ought to be so separated from the rest as not to remain still more harmonious than prose, or to show, by the disposition of the tones, that it is part of a verse. This rule in the old hexameter might be easily observed, but in English will very frequently be in danger of violation; for the order and regularity of accents cannot well be perceived in a succession of fewer than three syllables, which will confine the English poet to only five pauses; it being supposed that when he connects one line with another, he should never make a full pause at less distance than that of three syllables from the beginning or end of a verse.

That this rule should be universally and indispensably established, perhaps cannot be granted; something may be allowed to variety, and something to the adaptation of the numbers to the subject; but it will be found generally necessary, and the ear will seldom fail to suffer by its neglect.

Thus when a single syllable is cut off from the rest, it must either be united to the line with which the sense connects it, or be sounded alone. If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony; if disjoined, it must stand alone, and with regard to music be superfluous; for there is no harmony in a single sound, because it has no proportion to another.

> ———Hypocrites austerely talk;
> Defaming as impure what God declares
> *Pure*; and commands to some, leaves free to all.

When two syllables likewise are abscinded from the rest, they evidently want some associate sounds to make them harmonious.

> ———Eyes———
> —more wakeful than to drowse,
> Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
> Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. *Meanwhile*
> To re-salute the world with sacred light
> Leucothea waked.
>
> He ended, and the Son gave signal high
> To the bright minister that watch'd: *he blew*
> His trumpet.
>
> First in the east his glorious lamp was seen,
> Regent of day; and all th' horizon round
> Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
> His longitude through heaven's high road; *the gray*
> Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,
> Shedding sweet influence.

The same defect is perceived in the following line, where the pause is at the second syllable from the beginning

> ———The race
> Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
> In Rhodope where woods and rocks had ears
> To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
> Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
> *Her son.* So fail not thou, who thee implores

When the pause falls upon the third syllable or the seventh, the harmony is better preserved, but as the third and seventh are weak syllables the period leaves the ear unsatisfied, and in expectation of the remaining part of the verse.

> ———He, with his horrid crew,
> Lay vanquish'd rolling in the fiery gulf,
> Confounded though immor*tal*. But his doom
> Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
> Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
> Torments *him*.
>
> God, with frequent intercourse,
> Thither will send his winged messengers
> On errands of supernal grace. So sung
> The glorious train ascend*ing*.

It may be, I think, established as a rule, that a pause which concludes a period should be made

for the most part upon a strong syllable, as the fourth and sixth; but those pauses which only suspend the sense may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the rest in the third line of the first passage satisfies the ear better than in the fourth, and the close of the second quotation better than of the third.

——The evil soon
Drawn back, redounded (as a flood) on those
From whom it *sprung*; impossible to mix
With *blessedness*.

——What we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to *wild*.

The paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist *us*.

The rest in the fifth place has the same inconvenience as in the seventh and third, that the syllable is weak.

Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish, to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each *other*; Nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled *him*, or with countenance grim,
Glared on him passing.

The noblest and most majestic pauses which our versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables, which are both strongly sounded in a pure and regular verse, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony.

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
A glimmering *dawn*: here nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and chaos to retire.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable, which, taking in a complete compass of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of our lyric measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration.

Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with the eternal wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial *song*.

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there,
He stay'd not to *inquire*.

—— He blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since, perhaps
When God descended; and, perhaps, once more
To sound at general *doom*.

If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into each other, it will appear that he has performed all that our language would admit; and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will show that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning

No. 91.] TUESDAY, JAN. 29, 1751.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit. HOR

To court the great ones, and to soothe their pride,
Seems a sweet task to those that never tried;
But those that have, know well that danger's near.
CREECH.

THE Sciences having long seen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind without reward, put up their petition to Jupiter for a more equitable distribution of riches and honours. Jupiter was moved at their complaints, and touched with the approaching miseries of men, whom the Sciences, wearied with perpetual ingratitude, were now threatening to forsake, and who would have been reduced by their departure to feed in dens upon the mast of trees, to hunt their prey in deserts, and to perish under the paws of animals stronger and fiercer than themselves.

A synod of the celestials was therefore convened, in which it was resolved, that Patronage should descend to the assistance of the Sciences. Patronage was the daughter of Astrea, by a mortal father, and had been educated in the school of Truth, by the goddesses, whom she was now appointed to protect. She had from her mother that dignity of aspect, which struck terror into false merit, and from her mistress that reserve, which made her only accessible to those whom the Sciences brought into her presence.

She came down with the general acclamation of all the powers that favour learning. Hope danced before her, and Liberality stood at her side, ready to scatter by her direction the gifts which Fortune, who followed her, was commanded to supply. As she advanced towards Parnassus, the cloud which had long hung over it, was immediately dispelled. The shades, before withered with drought, spread their original verdure, and the flowers that had languished with chilness brightened their colours, and invigorated their scents; the Muses tuned their harps and exerted their voices; and all the concert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On Parnasses she fixed her residence, in a palace raised by the Sciences, and adorned with whatever could delight the eye, elevate the imagination, or enlarge the understanding. Here she dispersed the gifts of Fortune with the impartiality of Justice, and the discernment of Truth. Her gate stood always open, and Hope sat at the portal, inviting to entrance, all whom the Sciences numbered in their train. The court was therefore thronged with innumerable multitudes, of whom, though many returned disappointed, seldom any had confidence to complain; for Patronage was known to neglect few, but for want of the due claims to her regard. Those therefore, who had solicited her favour without success, generally withdrew from public notice, and either diverted their attention to meaner employments, or endeavoured to supply their deficiences by closer application.

In time, however, the number of those who had miscarried in their pretensions grew so great, that they became less ashamed of their repulses; and, instead of hiding their disgrace in retirement, began to besiege the gates of the palace, and obstruct the entrance of such as they thought likely to be more caressed. The decisions of Patronage, who was but half a goddess, had been sometimes erroneous; and though she al

ways made haste to rectify her mistakes, a few instances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgment to his own, and that of his companions, who are always ready to clamour in the common cause, and elate each other with reciprocal applause.

Hope was a steady friend to the disappointed, and Impudence incited them to accept a second invitation, and lay their claim again before Patronage. They were again, for the most part, sent back with ignominy, but found hope not alienated, and Impudence more resolutely zealous; they therefore contrived new expedients, and hoped at last to prevail by their multitudes, which were always increasing, and their perseverance, which Hope and Impudence forbade them to relax.

Patronage having been long a stranger to the heavenly assemblies, began to degenerate towards terrestrial nature, and forgot the precepts of Justice and Truth. Instead of confining her friendship to the Sciences, she suffered herself, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with Pride the son of Falsehood, by whose embraces she had two daughters, Flattery and Caprice. Flattery was nursed by Liberality, and Caprice by Fortune, without any assistance from the lessons of the Sciences.

Patronage began openly to adopt the sentiments and imitate the manners of her husband, by whose opinions she now directed her decisions with very little heed to the precepts of Truth; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the Sciences lost their influence, till none found much reason to boast of their reception, but those whom Caprice or Flattery conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had so long waited, and so often been dismissed for want of recommendation from the Sciences, were delighted to see the power of those rigorous goddesses tending to its extinction. Their patronesses now renewed their encouragements. Hope smiled at the approach of Caprice, and Impudence was always at hand to introduce her clients to Flattery.

Patronage had now learned to procure herself reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and, instead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered the antechamber to be erected, called among mortals the Hall of Expectation. Into this hall the entrance was easy to those whom Impudence had consigned to Flattery, and it was therefore crowded with a promiscuous throng, assembled from every corner of the earth, pressing forward with the utmost eagerness of desire, and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and alacrity, and made no doubt of speedy access, under the conduct of Flattery, to the presence of Patronage. But it generally happened that they were here left to their destiny, for the inner doors were committed to Caprice, who opened and shut them, as it seemed, by chance, and rejected or admitted without any settled rule of distinction. In the mean time, the miserable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the sport of Suspicion, who was always whispering into their ear designs against them which were never formed, and of Envy, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. Infamy flew round the hall, and scattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was stained; Reputation followed her with slower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemishes with paint, which was immediately brushed away, or separated of itself, and left the stains more visible; nor were the spots of Infamy ever effaced, but with limpid water effused by the hand of Time from a well which sprung up beneath the throne of Truth.

It frequently happened that Science, unwilling to lose the ancient prerogative of recommending to Patronage, would lead her followers into the Hall of Expectation; but they were soon discouraged from attending; for not only Envy and Suspicion incessantly tormented them, but Impudence considered them as intruders, and incited Infamy to blacken them. They therefore quickly retired, but seldom without some spots which they could scarcely wash away, and which showed that they had once waited in the Hall of Expectation.

The rest continued to expect the happy moment, at which Caprice should beckon them to approach; and endeavoured to propitiate her, not with Homerical harmony, the representation of great actions, or the recital of noble sentiments, but with soft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praises of Patronage and Pride, by whom they were heard at once with pleasure and contempt.

Some were indeed admitted by Caprice, when they least expected it, and heaped by Patronage with the gifts of Fortune; but they were from that time chained to her footstool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods; they seemed proud of their manacles, and seldom complained of any drudgery however servile, or any affront however contemptuous; yet they were often, notwithstanding their obedience, seized on a sudden by Caprice, divested of their ornaments, and thrust back into the Hall of Expectation.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to seek happiness in the regions of liberty, continued to spend hours, and days and years, courting the smile of Caprice by the arts of Flattery; till at length new crowds pressed in upon them, and drove them forth at different outlets into the habitations of Disease, and Shame, and Poverty, and Despair, where they passed the rest of their lives in narratives of promises and breaches of faith, of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments.

The Sciences, after a thousand indignities, retired from the palace of Patronage, and having long wandered over the world in grief and distress, were led at last to the cottage of Independence, the daughter of Fortitude; where they were taught by Prudence and Parsimony to support themselves in dignity and quiet.

T

No. 92.] SATURDAY, FEB. 2, 1751.

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
Perstringis aures, jam litui strepunt. HOR.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,
Its threatening murmurs pierce my ear,
And in thy lines with brazen breath
The trumpet sounds the charge of death. FRANCIS.

It has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined, different in different

minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument, but example and authority. It is, indeed, so little subject to the examinations of reason, that Paschal supposes it to end where demonstration begins, and maintains, that without incongruity and absurdity we cannot speak of *geometrical beauty*.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases apparent that this quality is merely relative and comparative; that we pronounce things beautiful because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accustomed to find it in other things of the same kind; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind, and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast, because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles; to improve opinion into knowledge; and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegancies which appeal only to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantress of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense, or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I shall endeavour to examine how much these conformities have been observed by the poets, or directed by the critics, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by Milton.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, as he that, of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound; "for there are, (says he,) innumerable passages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose; or, in which, on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness, are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish and slow pace with which the blind Polypheme groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it.

Κύκλωψ δὲ στενάχων τε καὶ ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι,
Χερσὶ ψηλαφόων———

Meantime the Cyclop raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches roun; and round.
POPE.

The critic then proceeds to show, that the efforts of Achilles struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting, and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the syllables, the slow succession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants.

Δεῖνον δ' ἀμφ' Ἀχιλῆα κυκώμενον ἵστατο κῦμα.
Ὤθει δ' ἐν σάκεϊ πίπτων ῥόος· οὐδὲ πόδεσσιν
Ἔσκε στηρίξασθαι.———

So oft the surge, in watery mountains spread,
Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head;
Yet, dauntless still, the adverse flood he braves,
And still indignant bounds above the waves,
Tired by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
Wash'd from beneath him, slides the slimy soil.
POPE.

When Homer describes the erush of men dashed against a rock, he eollects the most unpleasing and harsh sounds.

Σὺν δὲ δόω μάρψας, ὥστε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαιῃ
Κόπτ· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.

———His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor;
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.
POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes something dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult utterance.

Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐστεφάνωτο
Δεινὸν δερκομένη· περὶ δὲ Δεῖμος τε φόβος τε.

Tremendous Gorgon frown'd upon its field,
And circling terrors fill'd th' expressive shield.
POPE.

Many other examples Dionysius produces; but these will sufficiently show, that either he was fanciful, or we have lost the genuine pronunciation; for I know not whether, in any one of these instances, such similitude can be discovered. It seems, indeed, probable, that the veneration with which Homer was read, produced many supposititious beauties; for though it is certain, that the sound of many of his verses very justly corresponds with the things expressed, yet, when the force of his imagination, which gave him full possession of every object, is considered, together with the flexibility of his language, of which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not however to be doubted, that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed so much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured among other excellences, to exhibit this similitude; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versification.

This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his Art of Poetry.

Haud satis est illis utcunque claudere versum.—
Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
Atque sono quæcunque canunt imitantur, et apta
Verborum facie, et quæsito carminis ore.
Nam diversa opus est veluti dare versibus ora,
Hic melior motuque pedum, et pernicibus alis,
Molle viam tacito lapsu per levia radit:
Ille autem membris, ac mole ignavius ingens
Incedit tardo molimine subsidendo.
Ecce aliquis subit egregio pulcherrimus ore,
Cui lætum membris Venus omnibus afflat honorem.
Contra alius rudis, informes ostendit et artus,
Hirsutumque supercilium, ac caudam sinuosam,
Ingratus visu, sonitu illætabilis ipso.———
Ergo ubi jam nautæ spumas salis ære ruentes
Incubuere mari, videas spumare, reductis
Convulsum remis, rostrisque strideutibus æquor.
Tunc louge sale saxa sonant, tunc et freta ventis
Incipiunt agitata tumescere: littore fluctus
Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remurmurat unda
Ad scopulos, cumulo insequitur præruptus aquæ mons.—
Cum vero ex alto speculatus cærula Nereus
Leniit in morem stagni, placidæque paludis,
Lubitur uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina.—
Verba etiam res exiguas angusta sequuntur,
Ingeutesque juvant ingentia: cuncta gigantem
Vasta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,
Et magni membrorum artus, magna ossa, lacertique.
Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimine magno,
Adde moram, et pariter tecum quoque verba laborent
Segnia; seu quando vi multa gleba coactis
Æternum frangenda bidentibus, æquore seu cum
Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.
At mora si fuerit damno properare jubeho.
Si se forte cava extulerit mala vipera terra,
Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, pastor;
Ferte citi flammas, date tela, repellite pestem.
Ipse etiam versus ruat, in præcepsque feratur,
Immenso cum præcipitans ruit Oceano nox,
Aut cum percussus graviter procumbit humi bos.
Cumque etiam requies rebus datur, ipsa quoque ultro
Carmina paulisper cursu cessare videbis
In medio interrupta: quierunt cum freta ponti,
Postquam auræ posuere, quiescere protinus ipsum
Cernere erit, mediisque incœptis sistere versum.
Quid dicam, senior cum telum imbelle sine ictu
Invalidus jacit, et defectis viribus æger?
Num quoque tum versus segni pariter pede languet:
Sanguis hebet, frigent effœtæ in corpore vires.
Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces,
Evertisse domos, præfractaque quadrupedantum
Pectora pectorihus perrumpere, sternere turres
Ingentes, totaque, ferum dare funera campo.

'Tis not enough his verses to complete,
In measure, numbers, or determined feet.
To all, proportion'd terms he must dispense,
And make the sound a picture of the sense;
The correspondent words exactly frame,
The look, the features, and the mien the same.
With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away:
This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
And Venus breathes on every limb a grace;
That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,
Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows;
His monstrous tail, in many a fold and wind,
Voluminous and vast, curls up behind;
At once the image and the lines appear
Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.
Lo! when the sailors steer the ponderous ships,
And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps
Incumbent on the main that roars around,
Beneath their labouring oars the waves resound;
The prows wide echoing through the dark profound
To the loud call each distant rock replies;
Toss'd by the storm the towering surges rise;
While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore,
Dash'd from the strand, the flying waters roar.
Flash at the shock, and gathering in a heap,
The liquid mountains rise, and overhang the deep.
But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,
And calms at one regard the raging seas,
Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.

When things are small, the terms should still be so;
For low words please us, when the theme is low
But when some giant, horrible and grim,
Enormous in his gait, and vast in every limb,
Stalks towering on; the swelling words must rise
In just proportion to the monster's size.
If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move,
When each stiff clod beneath the ponderous plough
Crumbles and breaks, th' encumber'd lines march slow
Nor less, when pilots catch the friendly gales,
Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretch'd sails
But if the poem suffers from delay,
Let the lines fly precipitate away,
And when the viper issues from the brake,
Be quick; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack
His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.
When night descends, or stunn'd by numerous strokes,
And groauing, to the earth drops the vast ox;
The line too sinks with correspondent sound,
Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.
When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
And hush the roarings of the sea to peace;
So oft we see the interrupted strain
Stopp'd in the midst—and with the silent main
Paused for a space—at last it glides again.
When Priam strains his aged arm, to throw
His unavailing javelin at the foe;
(His blood congeal'd, and every nerve unstrung)
Then with the theme complies the artful song;
Like him, the solitary numbers flow,
Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow
Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force
Beats down embattled armies in his course.
The raging youth in trembling Ilion falls,
Bursts her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls;
Provokes his flying courser to his speed,
In full career to charge the warlike steed:
He piles the field with mountains of the slain;
He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain.

PITT.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its increase.

Soft is the strain, when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows,
But when loud billows lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow;
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn and skims along the main.

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after this imagery of sound. The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed distinctly imaged, for it requires very little skill to make our language rough; but in these lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified; why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they, therefore, naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending* one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present critics to inquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is therefore useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded; what discoveries they have made; and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

No. 93.] Tuesday, Feb. 5, 1751.

——Experiar quid concedatur in illos
Quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina.
JUV.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,
On names now found alone on books and tombs.

There are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors; nor any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with more opinions which the progress of his studies and the increase of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of the decisions of the learned, by an enumeration of the prejudices which mislead the critic, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgment. His catalogue, though large, is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot in the present state of human knowledge be evinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are therefore wholly subject to the imagination, and do not force their effects upon a mind pre-occupied by unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the counter-action of a false principle or of stubborn partiality.

To convince any man against his will is hard, but to please him against his will is justly pronounced by Dryden to be above the reach of human abilities. Interest and passion will hold out long against the closest siege of diagrams and syllogisms, but they are absolutely impregnable to imagery and sentiment; and will for ever bid defiance to the most powerful strains of Virgil or Homer, though they may give way in time to the batteries of Euclid or Archimedes.

In trusting therefore to the sentence of a critic, we are in danger not only from that vanity which exalts writers too often to the dignity of teaching what they are yet to learn, from that negligence which sometimes steals upon the most vigilant caution, and that fallibility to which the condition of nature has subjected every human understanding; but from a thousand extrinsic and accidental causes, from every thing which can excite kindness or malevolence, veneration or contempt.

Many of those who have determined with great boldness upon the various degrees of literary merit, may be justly suspected of having passed sentence, as Seneca remarks of Claudius,

Una tantum parte audita,
Sæpe et nulla,

without much knowledge of the cause before them: for it will not easily be imagined of Langbane, Borrichitus, or Rapin, that they had very accurately perused all the books which they praise or censure; or that, even if nature and learning had qualified them for judges, they could read for ever with the attention necessary to just criticism. Such performances, however, are not wholly without their use; for they are commonly just echoes to the voice of fame, and transmit the general suffrage of mankind when they have no particular motives to suppress it.

Critics, like the rest of mankind, are very frequently misled by interest. The bigotry with which editors regard the authors whom they illustrate or correct, has been generally remarked. Dryden was known to have written most of his critical dissertations only to recommend the work upon which he then happened to be employed: and Addison is suspected to have denied the expediency of poetical justice, because his own Cato was condemned to perish in a good cause.

There are prejudices which authors, not otherwise weak or corrupt, have indulged without scruple; and perhaps some of them are so complicated with our natural affections, that they cannot easily be disentangled from the heart. Scarce any can hear with impartiality a comparison between the writers of his own and another country: and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations, that they are blinded with this literary patriotism, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondness of affinity, and esteem them as well for the place of their birth, as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, seldom much respect due to comparative criticism, when the competitors are of different countries, unless the judge is of a nation equally indifferent to both. The Italians could not for a long time believe, that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the French seem generally persuaded, that there are no wits or reasoners equal to their own. I can scarcely conceive that if Scaliger had not considered himself as allied to Virgil, by being born in the same country, he would have found his works so much superior to those of Homer, or have thought the controversy worthy of so much zeal, vehemence and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any dishonour to be sometimes misguided. Criticism has so often given occasion to the envious and ill-natured, of gratifying their malignity, that some have thought it necessary to recommend the virtue of candour without restriction, and to preclude all future liberty of censure. Writers possessed with this opinion are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to critics the proper diffidence of themselves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that these professed enemies of arrogance and severity have much more benevolence or modesty than the rest of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts, any other intention than to distinguish themselves by their softness and delicacy. Some are modest because they are timorous, and some are lavish of praise because they hope to be repaid.

There is, indeed, some tenderness due to living writers, when they attack none of those truths which are of importance to the happiness of mankind, and have committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulness. I should think it cruelty to crush an insect who had provoked me only by buzzing in my ear; and would not willingly interrupt the dream of harmless stupidity, or destroy the jest which makes

its author laugh. Yet I am far from thinking this tenderness universally necessary, for he that writes may be considered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; since he quits the common rank of life, steps forward beyond the lists, and offers his merit to the public judgment. To commence author is to claim praise, and no man can justly aspire to honour, but at the hazard of disgrace.

But, whatever be decided concerning contemporaries, whom he that knows the treachery of the human heart, and considers how often we gratify our own pride or envy, under the appearance of contending for elegance and propriety, will find himself not much inclined to disturb; there can surely be no exemptions pleaded to secure them from criticism, who can no longer suffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon these authors the critic is undoubtedly at full liberty to exercise the strictest severity, since he endangers only his own fame; and like Æneas, when he drew his sword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may, indeed, pay some regard to established reputation; but he can by that show of reverence consult only his own security, for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, because the influence of his example is more extensive; and the interest of learning requires that they should be discovered and stigmatised, before they have the sanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indisputable authority.

It has, indeed, been advanced by Addison, as one of the characteristics of a true critic, that he points out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius to apply himself chiefly to the study of writers who have more beauties than faults to be displayed: for the duty of criticism is neither to depreciate, nor dignify by partial representations, but, to hold out the light of reason, whatever it may discover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever she shall dictate.

No. 94.] SATURDAY, FEB. 9, 1751.

——Bonus atque fidus
Judex—per obstantes catervas
Explicuit sua victor arma. HOR.

Perpetual magistrate is he
Who keeps strict justice full in sight;
Who bids the crowd at awful distance gaze,
And virtue's arms victoriously displays. FRANCIS.

THE resemblance of poetic numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together, or as comprised in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language which admits of poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supplies him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his measure with his subject, even without any effort of the understanding, or intervention of the judgment. To revolve jollity and mirth necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eye with vivacity; and reflection on gloomy situations and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers, as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the similitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and the exultation of triumph; and the same languor of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many occasions we make the music which we imagine ourselves to hear, that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasant message in an unpleasing manner, and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those whom for any reason we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptations of harmony are chimerical, that Homer had no extraordinary attention to the melody of his verse when he described a nuptial festivity;

Νυμφας δ' ἐκ θαλαμων, δαίδων, ὑπολαμπομεναων,
Ηγινεον ανά αστυ, πολυς δ' ὑμεναιος ὀρωρει.

Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight
And solemn dance, and hymencal rite;
Along the street the new-made brides are led,
With torches flaming to the nuptial bed;
The youthful dancers in a circle bound
To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound. POPE.

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he supposed Virgil endeavouring to represent by uncommon sweetness of numbers the adventitious beauty of Æneas:

Os, humerosque Deo similis: namque ipse vecoram
Cæsariem nato genitrix, lumenque juventæ
Purpureum, et latos oculis afflarat honores.

The Trojan chief appear'd in open sight,
August in visage, and serenely bright;
His mother goddess with her hands divine,
Had form'd his curling locks, and made his temples shine
And given his rolling eyes a sparkling grace,
And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face. DRYDEN.

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions:

Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs! warbling tune his praise.

That Milton understood the force of sounds well adjusted, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient measures, cannot be doubted; since he was both a musician and a critic; but he seems to have considered these conformities of cadence as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excellences unworthy of his ambition: for it will not be found that he has always assigned the same cast of numbers to the same objects. He has given in two passages very minute descriptions of angelic beauty; but though the images are nearly the same, the numbers will be found upon comparison very different:

And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face

Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correspondent with that symmetrical elegance and easy grace which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compensated by the representation of Raphael, which equally delights the ear and imagination:

A seraph wing'd; six wings he wore to shade
His lineaments Divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament: the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold,
And colours dipp'd in heaven: the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain! like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide.——

The adumbration of particular and distinct images by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound, is sometimes studied, and sometimes casual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noises which they signify. Such are Strider, Balo, and Beatus, in Latin; and in English to growl, to buzz, to hiss, and to jar. Words of this kind give to a verse the proper similitude of sound, without much labour of the writer, and such happiness is therefore rather to be attributed to fortune than skill; yet they are sometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impression of the idea. We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil;

Et fugit *horrendum stridens* elapsa sagitta,

Th' impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing——POPE.

and the creaking of hell-gates, in the description by Milton;

——Open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us that the sound of Homer's verses sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk: is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who after long inquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangour of a trumpet? The representative power of poetic harmony consists of sound and measure; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The critics, however, have struck out other similitudes; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by writers whose opinion the world has reason to regard;

Vertitur interea cœlum, et ruit oceano nox.——

Meantime the rapid heavens roll'd down the light,
And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night. DRYDEN.

Sternitur, exanimisque tremens, procumbit humi bos.——

Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound;
But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground.
DRYDEN.

Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.——

The mountains labour, and a mouse is born. ROSCOMMON.

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo:

——I fled, and cried out *death:*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded *death.*

The measure of time in pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This at least was the power of the spondaic and dactylic harmony, but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can indeed sometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, show the difficulty of a progress made by strong efforts and with frequent interruptions, or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos;

So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov'd on: with difficulty and labour he—

thus he has described the leviathans or whales!

Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait

But he has at other times neglected such representations, as may be observed in the volubility and levity of these lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant.

——Descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what confusion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then.

In another place, he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting.

Tripping ebb; that stole
With soft foot tow'rds the deep who now had stopp'd
His sluices.

It is not, indeed, to be expected, that the sound should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it; and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he im-

plored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellences which have ennobled all other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms; for there are readers who discover that in this passage,

So stretch'd out huge in length the arch fiend lay,

a *long* form is described in a *long* line; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a *slow* line, to which it has only the resemblance of time to space, of an hour to a maypole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark:

Then from the mountains hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
Measured by cubit, length and breadth, and height.

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the measure; for what analogy can there be between modulations of sound, and corporeal dimensions?

Milton, indeed, seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far as not to reject it when it came unsought; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform; a single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature, would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense; and he who had undertaken to *vindicate the ways of God to man*, might have been accused of neglecting his cause, had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.

No. 95.] TUESDAY, FEB. 12, 1751.

Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Coger relictos. HOR.

A fugitive from Heaven and prayer,
I mock'd at all religious fear,
Deep science'd in the mazy lore
Of mad philosophy; but now
Hoist sail, and back my voyage plow
To that blest harbour, which I left before.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are many diseases both of the body and mind, which it is far easier to prevent than to cure, and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and, from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed in time to canker the root.

I was born in the house of discord. My parents were of unsuitable ages, contrary tempers, and different religions, and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both in hourly disputes, and incessant contrivances to detect each other in the wrong; so that from the first exertions of reason I was bred a disputant, trained up in all the arts of domestic sophistry, initiated in a thousand low stratagems, nimble shifts, and sly concealments; versed in all the terms of altercation, and acquainted with the whole discipline of *fending* and *proving*.

It was necessarily my care to preserve the kindness of both the controvertists, and therefore I had very early formed the habit of suspending my judgment, of hearing arguments with indifference, inclining as occasion required to either side, and of holding myself undetermined between them till I knew for what opinion I might conveniently declare.

Thus, Sir, I acquired very early the skill of disputation; and as we naturally love the arts in which we believe ourselves to excel, I did not let my abilities lie useless, nor suffer my dexterity to be lost for want of practice. I engaged in perpetual wrangles with my schoolfellows, and was never to be convinced or repressed by any other arguments than blows, by which my antagonists commonly determined the controversy, as I was, like the Roman orator, much more eminent for eloquence than courage.

At the university I found my predominant ambition completely gratified by the study of logic. I impressed upon my memory a thousand axioms, and ten thousand distinctions, practised every form of syllogism, passed all my days in the schools of disputation, and slept every night with Smiglecius* on my pillow.

You will not doubt but such a genius was soon raised to eminence by such application: I was celebrated in my third year for the most artful opponent that the university could boast, and became the terror and envy of all the candidates for philosophical reputation.

My renown, indeed, was not purchased but at the price of all my time and all my studies. I never spoke but to contradict, nor declaimed but in defence of a position universally acknowledged to be false, and therefore worthy, in my opinion, to be adorned with all the colours of false representation, and strengthened with all the arts of fallacious subtilty.

My father, who had no other wish than to see his son richer than himself, easily concluded that I should distinguish myself among the professors of the law; and, therefore, when I had taken my first degree, despatched me to the Temple with a paternal admonition, that I should never suffer myself to feel shame, for nothing but modesty could retard my fortune.

Vitiated, ignorant, and heady, as I was, I had not yet lost my reverence for virtue, and therefore could not receive such dictates without horror; but however, was pleased with his determination of my course of life, because he placed me in the way that leads soonest from the prescribed walks of discipline and education, to the open fields of liberty and choice.

I was now in the place where every one catches the contagion of vanity, and soon began to

* A Polish writer, whose "Logic" was formerly held in great estimation in this country as well as on the continent

distinguish myself by sophisms and paradoxes I declared war against all received opinions and established rules, and levelled my batteries particularly against those universal principles which had stood unshaken in all the vicissitudes of literature, and are considered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of science.

I applied myself chiefly to those parts of learning which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity, and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and space, identity and infinity.

I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the system of Newton or Descartes, and favoured occasionally the hypothesis of Ptolemy, or that of Copernicus. I sometimes exalted vegetables to sense, and sometimes degraded animals to mechanism.

Nor was I less inclined to weaken the credit of history, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copiousness upon the advantages of absolute monarchy, the secrecy of its counsels, and the expedition of its measures; and often celebrated the blessings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclusion of debates.

Among the assertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of universal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary submission to those whom nature has levelled with ourselves.

I knew the defects of every scheme of government, and the inconveniences of every law. I sometimes showed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty sovereignties, and sometimes displayed the felicity and peace which universal monarchy would diffuse over the earth.

To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections; for it was my rule, to judge of history only by abstracted probability, and therefore I made no scruple of bidding defiance to testimony. I have more than once questioned the existence of Alexander the Great; and having demonstrated the folly of erecting edifices like the pyramids of Egypt, I frequently hinted my suspicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

It had been happy for me could I have confined my scepticism to historical controversies, and philosophical disquisitions; but having now violated my reason, and accustomed myself to inquire not after proofs but objections, I had perplexed truth with falsehood, till my ideas were confused, my judgment embarrassed, and my intellects distorted. The habit of considering every proposition as alike uncertain, left me no test by which any tenet could be tried; every opinion presented both sides with equal evidence, and my fallacies began to operate upon my own mind in more important inquiries. It was at last the sport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the distinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the sense of conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compass, without satisfaction of curiosity, or peace of conscience, without principles of reason, or motives of action.

Such is the hazard of repressing the first perceptions of truth, of spreading for diversion the snares of sophistry, and engaging reason against its own determination.

The disproportions of absurdity grow less and less visible, as we are reconciled by degrees to the deformity of a mistress; and falsehood by long use is assimilated to the mind, as poison to the body.

I had soon the mortification of seeing my conversation courted only by the ignorant or wicked, by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who, having long disobeyed virtue and reason, were now desirous of my assistance to dethrone them.

Thus alarmed, I shuddered at my own corruption, and that pride by which I had been seduced, contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irresolution, and a perpetual equipoise of the mind; and ashamed of being the favourite of those who were scorned and shunned by the rest of mankind.

I therefore retired from all temptation to dispute, prescribed a new regimen to my understanding, and resolved, instead of rejecting all established opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forbore to heat my imagination with needless controversies, to discuss questions confessedly uncertain, and refrained steadily from gratifying my vanity by the support of falsehood.

By this method I am at length recovered from my argumental delirium, and find myself in the state of one awakened from the confusion and tumult of a feverish dream. I rejoice in the new possession of evidence and reality, and step on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

I am, Sir, &c.

PERTINAX.

No. 96.] SATURDAY, FEB. 16, 1751.

Quod si Platonis musa personat verum,
Quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur.

BOETHIUS

Truth in Platonic ornaments bedeck'd
Inforced we love, unheeding recollect.

IT is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consisted in teaching youth *to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth:*

The bow and the horse were easily mastered, but it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what preservatives a Persian mind was secured against the temptations to falsehood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth, the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur; so many immediate evils are to be avoided, and so many present gratifications obtained, by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life, have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to speak

truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by interest, and the friend by tenderness: Those who are neither servile nor timorous, are yet desirous to bestow pleasure; and while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness, will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely extended, and many whom their conscience can scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronised the vice which they believe themselves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own sake; it is generally unpleasing because contrary to our wishes and opposite to our practice: and as our attention naturally follows our interests, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and soon forget what we have no inclination to impress upon our memories.

For this reason many arts of instruction have been invented, by which the reluctance against truth may be overcome; and as physic is given to children in confections, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances, that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy, Truth came among mortals from above, and Falsehood from below. Truth was the daughter of Jupiter and wisdom; Falsehood was the progeny of Folly impregnated by the wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation: and, as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turned upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior power and juster claim, and therefore came on towering and majestic, unassisted and alone; Reason indeed always attended her, but appeared her follower, rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive, and when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of Truth, and was very successful in the arts of mimicry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported, by innumerable legions of appetites and passions; but, like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and violent; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions, which she never hoped to keep by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met in full opposition. In these encounters, Falsehood always invested her head with clouds, and commanded Fraud to place ambushes about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of Impudence, and the quiver of Sophistry rattled on her shoulder. All the passions attended at her call; Vanity clapped her wings before, and Obstinacy supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against Truth, and sometimes waited the attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed, whenever the eye of Truth darted full upon her.

Truth had the awful aspect though not the thunder of her father, and when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, Falsehood let the arms of Sophistry fall from her grasp, and holding up the shield of Impudence with both her hands, sheltered herself amongst the passions.

Truth, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt, received by Falsehood, to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

Falsehood, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course, and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered Suspicion to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the way of Truth, who as she never varied her point, but moved constantly upon the same line, was easily escaped by the oblique and desultory movements, the quick retreats, and active doubles which Falsehood always practised, when the enemy began to raise terror by her approach.

By this procedure Falsehood every hour encroached upon the world and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories she left the passions in full authority behind her; who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when Truth came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it; they yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission; and always inclined to revolt when Truth ceased to awe them by her immediate presence.

Truth, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found, that, wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by Prejudice, and every heart preoccupied by Passion. She indeed advanced, but she advanced slowly; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her, by sudden insurrections of the appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

Truth, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable; yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness and artifice. She, therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father Jupiter to restablish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved, by submitting willingly to the usurpation of Falsehood.

Jupiter compassionated the world too much to grant her request, yet was willing to ease her labours and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to consult the Muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and

reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect, and the solemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her, till they ceased to fear her, since, by giving themselves up to Falsehood, they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by Desire. The Muses wove, in the loom of Pallas, a loose and changeable robe, like that in which Falsehood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction. She now went out again to conquer with more success; for when she demanded entrance of the Passions, they often mistook her for Falsehood, and delivered up their charge: but when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by Reason, and shone out, in her original form, with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

No. 97.] TUESDAY, FEB. 19, 1751.

Fœcunda culpæ secula nuptias
Primum inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit. HOR.

Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd
Their hapless offspring, and profaned
The nuptial bed; from whence the woes,
Which various and unnumber'd rose
From this polluted fountain head,
O'er Rome and o'er the nations spread. FRANCIS.

THE reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

WHEN the "Spectator" was first published in single papers, it gave me so much pleasure, that it is one of the favourite amusements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of those times, as described in that useful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wish that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human species, that if your precepts and observations be carried down to posterity, the Spectators may show to the rising generation what were the fashionable follies of their grandmothers, the "Rambler" of their mothers, and that from both they may draw instruction and warning.

When I read those Spectators which took notice of the misbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I used to pronounce such forward young women Seekers, in order to distinguish them by a mark of infamy from those who had patience and decency to stay till they were sought.

But I have lived to see such a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to compound with them for that name, although I then thought it disgraceful enough, if they would deserve no worse; since now they are too generally given up to negligence of domestic business, to idle amusements, and to wicked rackets, without any settled view at all but of squandering time.

In the time of the "Spectator," excepting sometimes in appearance in the ring, sometimes at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visit at the house of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themselves to be found employed in domestic duties; for then routs, drums, balls, assemblies, and such-like markets for women, were not known.

Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meekness, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteristic graces of the sex. And if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice, it was exposed in print as it deserved.

The churches were almost the only places where single women were to be seen by strangers. Men went thither expecting to see them, and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

But some good often resulted, however improper might be their motives. Both sexes were in the way of their duty. The man must be abandoned, indeed, who loves not goodness in another; nor were the young fellows of that age so wholly lost to a sense of right, as pride and conceit have since made them affect to be. When therefore they saw a fair-one, whose decent behaviour and cheerful piety showed her earnest in her first duties, they had the less doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

With what ardour have I seen watched for, the rising of a kneeling beauty; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features!

The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a Saul was once found prophesying among the prophets whom he had sent out to destroy. To a man thus put into good humour by a pleasing object, religion itself looked more amiable. The Men Seekers of the Spectator's time loved the holy place for the object's sake, and loved the object for her suitable behaviour in it.

Reverence mingled with their love, and they thought that a young lady of such good principles must be addressed only by the man who at least made a show of good principles, whether his heart was yet quite right or not.

Nor did the young lady's behaviour, at any time of the service, lessen this reverence. Her eyes were her own, her ears the preacher's. Women are always most observed when they seem themselves least to observe, or to lay out for observation. The eye of a respectful lover loves rather to receive confidence from the withdrawn eye of the fair-one, than to find itself obliged to retreat.

When a young gentleman's affection was thus laudably engaged, he pursued its natural dictates; keeping then was a rare, at least a secret and scandalous vice, and a wife was the summit of his wishes. Rejection was now dreaded, and pre-engagement apprehended. A woman whom he loved, he was ready to think must be admired by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties, increased his love.

Every inquiry he made into the lady's domestic excellence, which, when a wife is to be chosen, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honestly discovers the state of his fortune. His friend applies to those of the young lady, whose parents, if they approve of his proposals, disclose them to their daughter.

She perhaps is not an absolute stranger to the passion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his assiduities, his constant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and a thousand little observances that he paid her, had very probably first forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady should be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is a heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, must not allow. But, thus applied to, she is all resignation to her parents. Charming resignation, which inclination opposes not.

Her relations applaud her for her duty; friends meet; points are adjusted; delightful perturbations, and hopes, and a few lover's fears, fill up the tedious space till an interview is granted; for the young lady had not made herself cheap at public places.

The time of interview arrives. She is modestly reserved; he is not confident. He declares his passion; the consciousness of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his sincerity; and she owns herself obliged to him for his good opinion. The inquiries of her friends into his character, have taught her that his good opinion deserves to be valued.

She tacitly allows of his future visits; he renews them; the regard of each for the other is confirmed; and when he presses for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquiescence with her duty, and a modest acknowledgement of esteem for him.

He applies to her parents therefore for a near day; and thinks himself under obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application.

With this prospect of future happiness, the marriage is celebrated. Gratulations pour in from every quarter. Parents and relations on both sides, brought acquainted in the course of the courtship, can receive the happy couple with countenances illumined, and joyful hearts.

The brothers, the sisters, the friends of one family, are the brothers, the sisters, the friends of the other. The two families, thus made one, are the world to the young couple.

Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occasionally quit it but they find the pleasure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their absence from it.

Oh, Mr. Rambler, forgive the talkativeness, of an old man! When I courted and married my Lætitia, then a blooming beauty, every thing passed just so! But how is the case now? The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engrossed by places of open resort and general entertainment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis, and being constantly frequented, make home irksome Breakfasting-places, dining-places, routs, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, masquerade for the evening, and even for all night; and lately, public sales of the goods of broken housekeepers, which the general dissoluteness of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to these modern time-killers.

In the summer there are in every country-town assemblies; Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough! What expense of dress and equipage is required to qualify the frequenters for such emulous appearance.

By the natural infection of example, the lowest people have places of sixpenny resort, and gaming-tables for pence. Thus servants are now induced to fraud and dishonesty, to support extravagance, and supply their losses.

As to the ladies who frequent those public places, they are not ashamed to show their faces wherever men dare go, nor blush to try who shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh loudest on the public walks.

The men who would make good husbands, if they visit those places, are frighted at wedlock, and resolved to live single, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be spectators of all that passes, and if they please, more than spectators, at the expense of others. The companion of an evening, and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a domestic wife, would go farther than ten thousand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a fortune into uselessness: and pin-money is stipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her, that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card-tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying?

And when the worthy men know not where to find wives, must not the sex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make such? And need even these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation of those who render their company so cheap?

And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters? As she is approachable by every man without requiring, I will not say incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage: she has companions, indeed, but no lovers; for love is respectful and timorous; and where among all her followers will she find a husband?

Set, dear Sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconsiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are exposed. At one time or other, women not utterly thoughtless, will be convinced of the justice of your censure, and the charity of your instruction.

But should your expostulations and reproofs have no effect upon those who are far gone in fashionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces, (marriage will not often have entitled these to daughters.) when they, the meteors of a day, find themselves elbowed off the stage of vanity by other flutterers; for the most admired women cannot have many Tunbridge, many Bath seasons to blaze in; since even fine faces, often seen, are less regarded than new faces, the proper punishment of showy girls, for rendering themselves so impoliticly cheap.

I am, Sir,

Your sincere admirer, &c.*

* This paper was written by Richardson, the author of "Clarissa," "Pamela," &c. and although mean and hackneyed in style and sentiment, was the only paper which had a great sale during the publication of the "Rambler," in its original form.

No. 98.] SATURDAY, FEB. 23. 1751.

Quæ nec Sarmentus iniquas
Cæsaris ad mensas, nec vilis Galba tulisset. JUV.

Which not Sarmentus brook'd at Cæsar's board,
Nor grov'ling Galba from his haughty lord.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

YOU have often endeavoured to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes for the most part, in petty transactions; that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

It very commonly happens that speculation has no influence on conduct. Just conclusions, and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study, and diligent inquiry, are often reposited in the treasuries of memory, as gold in the miser's chest, useless alike to others and himself. As some are not richer for the extent of their possessions, others are not wiser for the multitude of their ideas.

You have truly described the state of human beings, but it may be doubted whether you have accommodated your precepts to your description; whether you have not generally considered your readers as influenced by the tragic passions, and susceptible of pain or pleasure only from powerful agents, and from great events.

To an author who writes not for the improvement of a single art, or the establishment of a controverted doctrine, but equally intends the advantage, and equally courts the perusal of all the classes of mankind, nothing can justly seem unworthy of regard, by which the pleasure of conversation may be increased, and the daily satisfaction of familiar life secured from interruption and disgust.

For this reason you would not have injured your reputation, if you had sometimes descended to the minuter duties of social beings, and enforced the observance of those little civilities and ceremonious delicacies, which, inconsiderable as they may appear to the man of science, and difficult as they may prove to be detailed with dignity, yet contribute to the regulation of the world, by facilitating the intercourse between one man and another, and of which the French have sufficiently testified their esteem, by terming the knowledge and practice of them *Sçavoir vivre, the art of living.*

Politeness is one of those advantages which we never estimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loss. Its influence upon the manners is constant and uniform, so that, like an equal motion, it escapes perception. The circumstances of every action are so adjusted to each other, that we do not see where any error could have been committed, and rather acquiesce in its propriety than admire its exactness.

But as sickness shows us the value of ease, a little familiarity with those who were never taught to endeavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will soon evince the necessity of established modes and formalities to the happiness and quiet of common life.

Wisdom and virtue are by no means sufficient, without the supplemental laws of good-breeding, to secure freedom from degenerating to rudeness, or self-esteem from swelling into insolence; a thousand incivilities may be committed, and a thousand offices neglected, without any remorse of conscience, or reproach from reason.

The true effect of genuine politeness seems to be rather ease than pleasure. The power of delighting must be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation: but though it be the privilege of a very small number to ravage and to charm, every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may, therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of mankind, though he should have no claim to higher distinctions.

The universal axiom in which all complaisance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which custom has established in civilized nations is, *That no man shall give any preference to himself.* A rule so comprehensive and certain, that, perhaps, it is not easy for the mind to imagine an incivility, without supposing it to be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place, some particular modes of the ceremonial part of good-breeding, which being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and conversation; such are the forms of salutation, the different gradations of reverence, and all the adjustments of place and precedence. These, however, may be often violated without offence, if it be sufficiently evident, that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure; but will not atone, however rigidly observed, for the tumour of insolence, or petulance of contempt.

I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind, less real and rational complaisance, than among those who have passed their time in paying and receiving visits, in frequenting public entertainments, in studying the exact measures of ceremony, and in watching all the variations of fashionable courtesy.

They know, indeed, at what hour they may beat the door of an acquaintance, how many steps they must attend him towards the gate, and what interval should pass before his visit is returned; but seldom extend their care beyond the exterior and unessential parts of civility, nor refuse their own vanity any gratification, however expensive to the quiet of another.

Trypherus is a man remarkable for splendour and expense; a man, that having been originally placed by his fortune and rank in the first class of the community, has acquired that air of dignity, and that readiness in the exchange of compliments, which courts, balls, and levees, easily confer.

But Trypherus, without any settled purposes of malignity, partly by his ignorance of human nature, and partly by the habit of contemplating with great satisfaction his own grandeur and riches, is hourly giving disgust to those whom chance or expectation subject to his vanity.

To a man whose fortune confines him to a small house, he declaims upon the pleasure of spacious apartments, and the convenience of changing his lodging-room in different parts of the year; tells him that he hates confinement; and concludes, that if his chamber was less, he should never wake without thinking of a prison.

To Eucretas, a man of birth equal to himself,

but of much less estate he showed his services of plate, and remarked that such things were, indeed, nothing better than costly trifles, but that no man must pretend to the rank of a gentleman without them; and that for his part, if his estate was smaller, he should not think of enjoying but increasing it, and would inquire out a trade for his eldest son.

He has, in imitation of some more acute observer than himself, collected a great many shifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed; and among the ladies of small fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and slight silks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

I have been insulted a thousand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which, though he knows the humble neatness of my habitation, he seldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that wherever he sees a house meanly furnished, he despises the owner's taste, or pities his poverty.

This, Mr. Rambler, is the practice of Trypherus, by which he has become the terror of all who are less wealthy than himself, and has raised innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

Yet though all are not equally culpable with Trypherus, it is scarcely possible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride by forcing others into a comparison with himself when he knows the advantage is on his side, without considering that unnecessarily to obtrude unpleasing ideas, is a species of oppression; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of some real advantage, than to interrupt that forgetfulness of its absence which is the next happiness to actual possession.

I am, &c. EUTROPIUS.

No. 99.] TUESDAY, FEB. 26, 1751.

Scilicet ingeniis aliqua est concordia junctis,
Et servat studii fœdera quisque sui,
Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat. OVID.

Congenial passions souls together bind,
And every calling mingles with its kind;
Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,
The mariner with him that roves the main.

F. LEWIS.

IT has been ordained by Providence, for the conservation of order in the immense variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the several classes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature should be drawn by some secret attraction to those of his own kind; and that not only the gentle and domestic animals which naturally unite into companies, or cohabit by pairs, should continue faithful to their species; but even those ravenous and ferocious savages which Aristotle observes never to be gregarious, should range mountains and deserts in search of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monstrous birth.

As the perpetuity and distinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they should be determined to proper mates by some uniform motive of choice, or some cogent principle of instinct; it is necessary, likewise, that man, whose wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himself innumerable wants, which a life of solitude cannot supply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment, should be led to suitable companions by particular influence; and, among many beings of the same nature with himself, he may select some for intimacy and tenderness, and improve the condition of his existence, by superadding friendship to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the species.

Other animals are so formed that they seem to contribute very little to the happiness of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but as they are urged by some desire immediately subservient either to the support of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they therefore seldom appear to regard any of the minuter discriminations which distinguish creatures of the same kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindness, more than his general tendency to congenial nature, Babylon or London, with all their multitudes, would have to him the desolation of a wilderness, his affections, not compressed into a narrower compass, would vanish, like elemental fire in boundless evaporation; he would languish in perpetual insensibility; and though he might, perhaps, in the first vigour of youth, amuse himself with the fresh enjoyments of life, yet, when curiosity should cease, and alacrity subside, he would abandon himself to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help against any calamity, or feeling any wish for the happiness of others.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible; at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now produce all our pains and all our pleasures; without the disuse, if not the abolition, of some of our faculties, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence, equally attentive to every misery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore necessarily broken into smaller independent societies; these form distinct interests, which are too frequently opposed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments falsely think it virtue to promote, however destructive to the happiness of the rest of the world.

Such unions are again separated into subordinate classes and combinations, and social life is perpetually branched out into minuter subdivisions, till it terminates in the last ramifications of private friendship.

That friendship may at once be fond and lasting, it has been already observed in these papers, that a conformity of inclinations is necessary. No man can have much kindness for him by whom he does not believe himself esteemed, and nothing so evidently proves esteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always strongest which arises from participation of the same pleasures, since we are naturally most willing to revive in

our minds the memory of persons, with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpose that any one endeavours to ingratiate himself with such as he cannot accompany in their amusements and diversions. Men have been known to rise to favour and to fortune, only by being skilful in the sports with which their patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taste for some particular species of curiosities, by relishing the same wine, or applauding the same cookery.

Even those whom wisdom or virtue have placed above regard to such petty recommendations, must nevertheless be gained by similitude of manners. The highest and noblest enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of sentiments, must always presuppose a disposition to the same inquiry, and delight in the same discoveries.

With what satisfaction could the politician lay his schemes for the reformation of laws, or his comparison of different forms of government, before the chymist, who has never accustomed his thoughts to any other object than salt and sulphur? or how could the astronomer, in explaining his calculations and conjectures, endure the coldness of a grammarian, who would lose sight of Jupiter and all his satellites, for a happy etymology of an obscure word, or a better explication of a controverted line?

Every man loves merit of the same kind with his own, when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation; for he not only best understands the worth of those qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the usefulness of the art which he practises with success, but always feels a reflected pleasure from the praises which, though given to another, belong equally to himself.

There is indeed no need of research and refinement to discover that men must generally select their companions from their own state of life, since there are not many minds furnished for great variety of conversation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The sailor, the academic, the lawyer, the mechanic, and the courtier, have all a cast or look peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the same events, have been engaged in affairs of the same sort, and make use of allusions and illustrations which themselves only can understand.

To be infected with the jargon of a particular profession, and to know only the language of a single rank of mortals, is indeed sufficiently despicable. But as limits must be always set to the excursions of the human mind, there will be some study which every man more zealously prosecutes, some darling subject on which he is principally pleased to converse; and he that can most inform or best understand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided, nor is it culpable, unless suffered so far to predominate as to produce aversion from every other kind of excellence, and to shade the lustre of dissimilar virtues. Those, therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined, should endeavour constantly to approach towards the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurrent desire, and fan every spark of kindred curiosity.

It has been justly observed, that discord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmost vehemence by contrariety of taste, oftener than of principles; and might therefore commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at first the motive, ought always to be the consequence, of indissoluble union.

No. 100.] Saturday, March 2, 1751.

Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit.
PERSIUS

Horace, with sly insinuating grace,
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;
Would raise a blush where secret vice he found,
And tickle while he gently probed the wound.
With seeming innocence the crowd beguiled,
But made the desperate passes when he smiled.
DRYDEN

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

As very many well-disposed persons, by the unavoidable necessity of their affairs, are so unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country, where they labour under the most deplorable ignorance of what is transacting among the polite part of mankind, I cannot help thinking, that, as a public writer, you should take the case of these truly compassionable objects under your consideration.

These unhappy languishers in obscurity should be furnished with such accounts of the employments of people of the world, as may engage them in their several remote corners to a laudable imitation; or, at least so far inform and prepare them, that if by any joyful change of situation they should be suddenly transported into the gay scene, they may not gape, and wonder, and stare, and be utterly at a loss how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would use your charitable endeavours to raise in them a noble emulation of the manners and customs of higher life.

For this purpose you should give a very clear and ample description of the whole set of polite acquirements; a complete history of forms, fashions, frolics, of routs, drums, hurricanes, balls, assemblies, ridottos, masquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-shows, and bear gardens; of all those delights which profitably engage the attention of the most sublime characters, and by which they have brought to such amazing perfection the whole art and mystery of passing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy assistance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleased to call useful and necessary.

In giving due instructions through what steps to attain this summit of human excellence, you may add such irresistible arguments in its favour, as must convince numbers, who in other instances do not seem to want natural understanding, of the unaccountable error of supposing they were sent into the world for any other purpose but to flutter, sport, and shine. For, after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlasting round of diversion, and the more lively

and hurrying the better, is the most important end of human life.

It is really prodigious, so much as the world is improved, that there should in these days be persons so ignorant and stupid as to think it necessary to misspend their time, and trouble their heads about any thing else than pursuing the present fancy; for what else is worth living for?

It is time enough surely to think of consequences when they come; and as for the antiquated notions of duty, they are not to be met with in any French Novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almost wholly from the writings of authors, who lived a vast many ages ago; and who, as they were totally without any idea of those accomplishments, which now characterise people of distinction, have been for some time sinking apace into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their most zealous admirers, for some partisans of his own sort every writer will have, can pretend to say they were ever at one ridotto.

In the important article of diversions, the ceremonial of visits, the ecstatic delight of unfriendly intimacies, and unmeaning civilities, they are absolutely silent. Blunt truth, and downright honesty, plain clothes, staying at home, hard work, few words, and those unenlivened with censure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleasures of life. Little oaths, polite dissimulation, tea-table scandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they seem to have had no notion of, and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frighted they would have looked at a gaming-table.

The noble zeal of patriotism that disdains authority, and tramples on laws for sport, was absolutely the aversion of these tame wretches.

Indeed one cannot discover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wise and good; acquirements infinitely below the consideration of persons of taste and spirit, who know how to spend their time to so much better purpose.

Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. Rambler, do not forget to enlarge on the very extensive benefit of playing at cards on Sundays; a practice of such infinite use, that we may modestly expect to see it prevail universally in all parts of this kingdom.

To persons of fashion, the advantage is obvious; because, as for some strange reason or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor masquerade, nor bottled conjurer, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday; if it were not for the charitable assistance of whist or bragg, the genteel part of mankind must, one day in seven, necessarily suffer a total extinction of being.

Nor are the persons of high rank the only gainers by so salutary a custom, which extends its good influence, in some degree, to the lower orders of people; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now?

It is hard upon poor creatures, be they ever so mean, to deny them those enjoyments and liberties which are equally open for all. Yet if servants were taught to go to church on this day, spend some part of it in reading or receiving instruction in a family way, and the rest in mere friendly conversation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads, that they were obliged to be sober, modest, diligent, and faithful to their masters and mistresses.

Now surely no one of common prudence or humanity would wish their domestics infected with such strange and primitive notions, or laid under such unmerciful restraints: all which may, in a great measure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured fashion, that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people see their betters, with a truly laudable spirit, insulting and flying in the face of those rude, ill-bred dictators, piety and the laws, they are thereby excited and admonished, as far as actions can admonish and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of setting them at defiance in such instances as their particular necessities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human species mightily improved and enlarged.

In short, Mr. Rambler, by a faithful representation of the numberless benefits of a modish life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body seems to confess the true purpose of human existence, perpetual dissipation.

By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amusement their sole study, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneasy reflections.

All the soft feelings of humanity, the sympathies of friendship, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and solicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domestic and social affections, which create such daily anxieties and embarrassments, will be happily stifled and suppressed in a round of perpetual delights; and all serious thoughts, but particularly that of *hereafter*, be banished out of the world; a most perplexing apprehension, but luckily a most groundless one too, as it is so very clear a case, that nobody ever dies.

I am, &c.

CHARIESSA.*

No. 101.] TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1751.

Mella jubes Hyblæa tibi vel Hymettia nasci,
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corsica ponis api. MART.

Alas! dear Sir, you try in vain,
Impossibilities to gain;
No bee from Corsica's rank juice,
Hyblæan honey can produce. F. LEWIS

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING by several years of continual study treasured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained by frequent exercise the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readiness, I resolved to quit the university, where I considered myself as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of public life. I was naturally attracted by the company of those who

* Written by Mrs. Carter of Deal, the only survivor of the writers of that age.—C.

were of the same age with myself; and, finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burlesque. Thus, in a short time, I had heated my imagination to such a state of activity and ebullition, that upon every occasion it fumed away in bursts of wit, and evaporations of gayety. I became on a sudden the idol of the coffee-house, was in one winter solicited to accept the presidentship of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controversy upon theatrical merit; was in every public place surrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of resort my maxims and my jests, and was boasted as their intimate and companion by many, who had no other pretensions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the same room.

You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my success with some appearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of superiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of conversation, by extemporaneous sprightliness of fancy, copiousness of language, and fertility of sentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praise is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, spreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleasure or advantage from the diffusion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal sovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himself, and enjoys all the pleasure which he bestows; he finds his power confessed by every one that approaches him, sees friendship kindling with rapture, and attention swelling into praise.

The desire which every man feels of importance and esteem, is so much gratified by finding an assembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladness and hushed with expectation, that the recollection of such distinctions can scarcely fail to be pleasing whensoever it is innocent. And my conscience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity; since I always employed my influence on the side of virtue, and never sacrificed my understanding or my religion to the pleasure of applause.

There were many whom either the desire of enjoying my pleasantry, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company: but I was caressed in a particular manner by Democharcs, a gentleman of large estate, and a liberal disposition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleased with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table, and, as he believed my acquaintance necessary to the character of elegance, which he was desirous of establishing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence, without expense, or dependence, and passed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleasure, with men brought together by similitude of accomplishments, or desire of improvement.

But all power has its sphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. Democharcs being called by his affairs into the country, imagined that he should increase his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whose abilities were so generally allowed. The report presently spread through half the country that Democharcs was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated Hilarius, by whom such merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpose for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for possible miscarriages, was pleased to find myself courted upon principles of interest, and considered as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

After a few days spent in adjusting his domestic regulations, Democharcs invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining which I never knew before; and was therefore embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day; recollected all my topics of raillery, proposed proper subjects of ridicule, prepared smart replies to a thousand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat; and, notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to Hilarius. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet discover; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compliments, to turn away disappointed; and that while we waited for dinner, they cast their eyes first upon me and then upon each other, like a theatrical assembly waiting for a show.

From the uneasiness of this situation, I was relieved by the dinner; and as every attention was taken up by the business of the hour, I sunk quietly to a level with the rest of the company. But no sooner were the dishes removed, than, instead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, a universal silence again showed their expectation of some unusual performance. My friend endeavoured to rouse them by healths and questions, but they answered him with great brevity, and immediately relapsed into their former taciturnity.

I had waited in hope of some opportunity to divert them, but could find no pass opened for a single sally; and who can be merry without an object of mirth? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applause nor opposition, I was content to mingle with the mass, to put round the glass in silence, and solace myself with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him: the guests

stared at one another; and if now and then a few syllables were uttered with timidity and hesitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleasing, and disposition to be pleased. Thus passed the hours to which so much happiness was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to Hilarius.

At last the night came on, and the necessity of parting freed us from the persecutions of each other. I heard them as they walked along the court, murmuring at the loss of the day, and inquiring whether any man would pay a second visit to a house haunted by a wit?

Demochares, whose benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the secondary honour which he was to gain by my sprightliness and elegance, and the affection with which he should be followed for a perpetual banquet of gayety, was not able to conceal his vexation and resentment, nor would easily be convinced, that I had not sacrificed his interest to sullenness and caprice, and studiously endeavoured to disgust his guests, and suppressed my powers of delighting, in obstinate and premeditated silence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; some being of opinion that my friend is deluded by an impostor, who, though he has found some art of gaining his favour, is afraid to speak before men of more penetration; and others concluding, that I think only London the proper theatre of my abilities, and disdain to exert my genius for the praise of rustics.

I believe, Mr. Rambler, that it has sometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the same censures upon the like occasions. I hope, therefore, that you will prevent any misrepresentations of such failures, by remarking, that invention is not wholly at the command of its possessor; that the power of pleasing is very often obstructed by the desire; that all expectation lessens surprise, yet some surprise is necessary to gayety; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flashes into transport, can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas.

No. 102.] SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1751.

Ipsa quoque assidua labuntur tempora motu
Non secus ac flumen: neque enim consistere flumen,
Nec levis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur unda,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur.
OVID.

With constant motion as the moments glide,
Behold in running life the rolling tide,
For none can stem by art, or stop by power,
The flowing ocean, or the fleeting hour;
But wave by wave pursu'd arrives on shore,
And each impell'd behind impels before:
So time on time revolving we descry;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly. ELPHINSTON.

"LIFE," says Seneca, "is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age." The perusal of this passage having excited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and, on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the *ocean of life*; that we had already passed the streights of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence, of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness; and first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure: but no sooner touched, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands all was darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable; but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence; for by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swal-

lowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed; nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course; if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction, failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage; so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours; yet in effect, none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrors that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement for the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with Hope, who was the constant associate of the voyage of life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink last; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for, in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the *gulf of Intemperance*, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose, and with shades, where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet by which they might escape; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulf of Intemperance, where indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulf was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the gulf of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly! for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the streights of infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overset by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown Power: "Gaze not idly upon others, when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and seeing the gulf of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

No. 103.] TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1751.

Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri. JUV.

They search the secrets of the house, and so
Are worshipped there, and fear'd for what they know.
DRYDEN.

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect. Every advance into knowledge opens new prospects, and produces new incitements to further progress. All the attainments possible in our present state

are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conquest serves no purpose but that of kindling ambition, discovery has no effect but of raising expectation; the gratification of one desire encourages another; and, after all our labours, studies, and inquiries, we are continually at the same distance from the completion of our schemes, have still some wish importunate to be satisfied, and some faculty restless and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinsic and adventitious motives, seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle; we are eager to see and hear, without intention of referring our observations to a further end; we climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain; we run to the strand in a storm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profess neither architecture nor fortification; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude and every thing polished, every thing great and every thing little; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. Lucan therefore introduces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high-priest of Egypt, that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the Nile, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And Homer, when he would furnish the Sirens with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might yield without disgrace, makes them declare, that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to some use, or which may not at least gratify pride with occasional superiority; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will find, that upon the first appearance of an object, or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate discussion, precedes all thoughts of profit, or of competition; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed, by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst of the soul; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taste every thing with joy, however, otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward; and that science, though perhaps the nursling of interest, was the daughter of curiosity: for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars, foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the mensuration of time? They were delighted with the splendour of the nocturnal skies, they found that the lights changed their places; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion; a lover finds no inclination to travel any path, but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress; a trader can pay little attention to common occurrences, when his fortune is endangered by a storm. It is frequently the consequence of a total immersion in sensuality; corporeal pleasures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happiness is obliterated; the mind, long habituated to a lethargic and quiescent state, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking; and though she may sometimes be disturbed by the obtrusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to ignorance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual task of procuring the supports of life denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of such as live without the ardour of inquiry is very small, though many content themselves with cheap amusements, and waste their lives in researches of no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and excursive minds, than the cobwebs of petty inquisitiveness, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute studies, and detain them in a middle state, between the tediousness of total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with ease and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a genealogist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a constructor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industrious, are at least employed without injury to others; but it seldom happens that we can contain ourselves long in a neutral state, or forbear to sink into vice, when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life, he applied himself with particular inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of interest and ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualities by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of human nature to be worthy of

a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with submissive modesty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close inspection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and therefore no design of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expose them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of increasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general master of secret history, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and stratagems of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are felling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence, he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows, by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others, or dangerous to himself: but since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffic like the chymists, and purchase one secret with another; he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension to minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus, not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life which might have been honourably passed in public services, or domestic virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

No. 104.] Saturday, March 16, 1751.

——Nihil est quod credere de se
Non possit—— juv.

None e'er rejects hyperboles of praise.

The apparent insufficiency of every individual to his own happiness or safety, compels us to seek from one another assistance and support. The necessity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extensive design, the variety of powers disseminated in the species, and the proportion between the defects and excellences of different persons, demand an interchange of help, and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence unite mankind in society and friendship.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a state of equality, without distinction of rank, or peculiarity of possessions, it is reasonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his strength or his skill to the supply of natural wants; there was then little room for peevish dislike, or capricious favour; the affection admitted into the heart was rather esteem than tenderness; and kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when by force or policy, by wisdom or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemned to labour for the support of a few, then they whose passions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure, and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create needs, which they might be courted to supply

The desires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than the actual enjoyment. Multitudes are therefore unsatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to improve his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himself excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the art of pleasing among the most useful studies, and most valuable acquisitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its usefulness, and will always flourish most where it is most rewarded; for this reason we find it practised with great assiduity under absolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who soon becomes so much accustomed to compliance and officiousness, as not easily to find, in the most delicate address, that novelty which is necessary to procure attention.

It is discovered by a very few experiments, that no man is much pleased with a companion, who does not increase, in some respect, his fondness of himself; and therefore, he that wishes rather to be led forward to prosperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, must consider with more care how to display his patron's excellences than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleasing dreams, and chase away disgust and weariness by a perpetual succession of delightful images.

This may, indeed, sometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really possessed, or upon prospects which reason spreads before hope; for whoever can deserve or require to be courted, has generally, either from nature or from fortune, gifts, which he may

review with satisfaction, and of which, when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will seldom be displeased.

But those who have once degraded their understanding to an application only to the passions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other sources than industry and virtue, seldom retain dignity and magnanimity sufficient to defend them against the constant recurrence of temptation to falsehood. He that is too desirous to be loved, will soon learn to flatter, and when he has exhausted all the variations of honest praise, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new topics of panegyric, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himself.

The drudgeries of dependence would, indeed, be aggravated by hopelessness of success, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will obstinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deserves, will soon be forced to give way to others, that regale him with more compass of music. The greatest human virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourselves better than we are, and are generally desirous that others should think us still better than we think ourselves. To praise us for actions or dispositions which deserve praise, is not to confer a benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretensions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be disputable, and which we are desirous to strengthen by a new suffrage; we have always hopes which we suspect to be fallacious, and of which we eagerly snatch at every confirmation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the first approaches under the conduct of truth, and to secure credit to future encomiums, by such praise as may be ratified by the conscience; but the mind once habituated to the lusciousness of eulogy, becomes, in a short time, nice and fastidious, and like a vitiated palate, is incessantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is scarcely credible to what degree discernment may be dazzled by the mist of pride, and wisdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may descend by successive gradations of servility, and how swiftly it may fall down the precipice of falsehood. No man can, indeed, observe, without indignation, on what names, both of ancient and modern times, the utmost exuberance of praise has been lavished, and by what hands it has been bestowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppressor, the most hateful of the hateful, the most profligate of the profligate, have been denied any celebrations which they were willing to purchase, or that wickedness and folly have not found correspondent flatterers through all their subordinations, except when they have been associated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyrist.

As there is no character so deformed as to fright away from it the prostitutes of praise, there is no degree of encomiastic veneration which pride has refused. The emperors of Rome suffered themselves to be worshipped in their lives with altars and sacrifices; and in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praise and worship of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered those that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of justice, as disturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who must be resigned to infamy without vindications, and whom we must confess to have deserted the cause of virtue for pay: they have committed, against full conviction, the crime of obliterating the distinctions between good and evil, and, instead of opposing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progress, and celebrated her conquests. But there is a lower class of sycophants, whose understanding has not made them capable of equal guilt. Every man of high rank is surrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance reconciles to all his vices, and all his absurdities; and who easily persuade themselves to esteem him, by whose regard they consider themselves as distinguished and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themselves within the sphere of greatness. Stupidity is soon blinded by the splendour of wealth, and cowardice is easily fettered in the shackles of dependance. To solicit patronage, is, at least, in the event, to set virtue to sale. None can be pleased without praise, and few can be praised without falsehood; few can be assiduous without servility, and none can be servile without corruption.

No. 105.] TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1751.

——Animorum
Impulsu, et cæca magnaque cupidine ducti. JUV

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resigned
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of a *universal register*, an office in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established, that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor its informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied; where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction; where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation; must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of

others. Nor will it be an uninstructing school to the greatest masters of method and despatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulations, its conveniences, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber: but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion: every face on which I fixed my eyes, seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleasing state of an idler, where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress, Curiosity. "Great goddess," said I, "may thy votary be permitted to implore thy favour; if thou hast been my directress from the first dawn of reason; if I have followed thee through the maze of life with invariable fidelity; if I have turned to every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pursuit for another; if I have never stopped at the invitations of fortune, nor forgotten thy authority in the bowers of pleasure; inform me now whither Chance has conducted me."

"Thou art now," replied the smiling power, "in the presence of Justice and of Truth, whom the father of gods and men has sent down to register the demands and pretensions of mankind, that the world may at last be reduced to order, and that none may complain hereafter of being doomed to tasks for which they are unqualified, of possessing faculties for which they cannot find employment, or virtues that languish unobserved for want of opportunities to exert them, of being encumbered with superfluities which they would willingly resign, or of wasting away in desires which ought to be satisfied. Justice is now to examine every man's wishes, and Truth is to record them; let us approach, and observe the progress of this great transaction."

She then moved forward, and Truth, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the seat of Justice. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand, demanded to be registered by Truth, as the Mæcenas of the present age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or distress with certainty of succour. Justice very mildly inquired, whether he had calculated the expense of such a declaration? Whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would swarm about him? Whether he could distinguish idleness and negligence from calamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To these questions he seemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his desire to be recorded a patron. Justice then offered to register his proposal on these conditions, that he should never suffer himself to be flattered; that he should never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he should never encourage followers without intending to reward them. These terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, said he, is the end of patronage, but the pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in suspense, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to assiduity, and, at last, dismissing them for impatience? Justice heard his confession, and ordered his name to be posted upon the gate among cheats and robbers, and public nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mein of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

Justice and Truth did not trouble this great adept with many inquiries; but finding his address awkward and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophic aspect, required notice to be given of his intention to set out, a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which they might sail above water. His desire was granted, and he retired to a convenient stand, in expectation of filling his ship, and growing rich in a short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedition of the passage.

Another desired to advertise the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical instrument, by which those who laid out their industry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might observe the direction of the weathercocks on the hitherside of the lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the author of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a single fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water should subside. Justice considered these projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore scarcely condescended to examine them; but Truth refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of a universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of Nestor. But Justice informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she should delay the notification till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

A thousand other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advan-

tages, many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil; but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten thousands that thought themselves entitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened, that old misers, and women married at the close of life, advertised their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son or daughter to be spared; but, though appearances promised well on both sides, the bargain seldom succeeded; for they soon lost their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote some scheme of public charity; a thousand proposals were immediately made, among which they hesitated till death precluded the decision.

As I stood looking on this scene of confusion, Truth condescended to ask me, what was my business at her office? I was struck with the unexpected question, and awaked by my efforts to answer it.

No. 106.] SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CIC.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

It is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or characters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffic: and the author will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit, or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise *monuments more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boast of literature; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, for the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a public library; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power?

——— *Non unquam dedit*
Documenta fors majora, quam fragili loco
Starent superbi.

Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice
On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are forgotten, because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagem of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up awhile by the breath of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but, perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay; some rise more slowly, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of present incidents or characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we display the faults or virtues of him whose public conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions all the motives of interest and vanity concur; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is desirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused; and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyric on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any

of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critic; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects are exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtility of reasoning, hope for much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition: or mankind despair of understanding it, and grow weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours which they have no hopes of recompensing with knowledge.

The authors of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of those who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected: we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments and natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations, as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors, that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors, whose business is to explain and illustrate it, and who can hope to exist no longer than the founder of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully studied human nature, and can well describe it, may with most reason flatter his ambition. Bacon, among all his pretensions to the regard of posterity, seems to have pleased himself chiefly with his Essays, *which come home to men's business and bosoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books last*. It may, however, satisfy an honest and benevolent mind to have been useful, though less conspicuous; nor will he that extends his hope to higher rewards be so much anxious to obtain praise, as to discharge the duty which Providence assigns him.

No. 107.] TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo
Cœpere: altĕrnos Musa meminisse vŏlebant.

VIRG

On themes alternate now the swains recite;
The Muses in alternate themes delight.

ELPHINSTON

AMONG the various censures, which the unavoidable comparison of my performances with those of my predecessors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of those changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhausted novelty, and of that intermixture of subjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved weariness, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same paper, because it seems absurd for an author to counteract himself, to press at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poison of Dryden, destroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured sometimes to divert, and sometimes to elevate; but have imagined it a useless attempt to disturb merriment by solemnity, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet I shall this day publish two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to please even when they are not critically approved.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the *alteration of the style*, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I asked a very great scholar what the style was? He told me, he was afraid I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of

computing time. It was not, indeed, likely that I should understand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come; but I have considered them both by myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems farther off by counting: and, therefore, when any pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon this subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself; for though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them, that any body has died sooner or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy that there was a great bustle with little consequence.

At last two friends of my papa, Mr. Cycle and Mr. Starlight, being, it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new style. Sweet Mr. Starlight—I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a *year of confusion*. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming? a whole year of confusion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest; and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolics, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old style or the new; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and play my part among the rest; and it will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning: and, indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new style is a delightful thing; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that with all the plots that have been laid against time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen, and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the music-master, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours, or family-rules.

I am, Sir,
Your humble Servant,
PROPERANTIA.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS seized this morning with an unusual pensiveness, and finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

As I wandered wrapt up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till, by a natural train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness!

The anguish that I felt left me no rest, till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the public on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town, whose misery here might satisfy the most rigorous censor; and whose participation of our common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent; and might still have continued blameless and easy; but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horror, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge? "*The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.*" Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they show the least design of escaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power, yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness.

There are places, indeed, set apart, to which these unhappy creatures may resort, when the diseases of incontinence seize upon them; but if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced? Either to return with the small remains of beauty to their former guilt, or perish in the streets with nakedness and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and thoughtless, in their evening frolics, seen a band of these miserable females, covered with rags, shivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon

the cruelty of those who perhaps first seduced them by caresses of fondness, or magnificence of promises, go on to reduce others to the same wretchedness by the same means?

To stop the increase of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the first and most pressing consideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and severity are properly employed. But surely those whom passion or interest have already depraved, have some claim to compassion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themselves. Nor will they long groan in their present afflictions, if none were to refuse them relief, but those that owe their exemption from the same distress only to their wisdom and their virtue.

I am, &c.

AMICUS.

No. 108.] SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 1751.

—— Sapere aude,
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

HOR.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise:
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream, which stopp'd him, should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.

COWLEY.

AN ancient poet unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which the system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, "that its greater part is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that of the rest some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands; some scorched with unintermitted heat, and some petrified with perpetual frost; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom; all that passes in regulating the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments; many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of our existence serves no other purpose, than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our disposal, it may reasonably be expected, that we should be so frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent: and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however straitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable that, either by nature, or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expenses, by the profusions of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires, which if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantic and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate

propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquests, and forbears another incursion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry, but perhaps if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity, than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this it has probably preceded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours, which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the "Praise of Folly," one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on his road to Italy; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis tereretur*, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature.

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that *time was his estate;* an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use.

No. 109.] TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1751.

Gratum est, quod patriæcivem populoque dedisti
Si facis, ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum, et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus instituas. JUV.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,
If you that member useful shall create;
Train'd both to war, and, when the war shall cease,
As fond, as fit t' improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy.

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your observation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks, and salutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and settling himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance. For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being; or that you imagine none but yourself able to discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world; whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the public; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain that, whatever be your subject, melancholy for the most part bursts in upon your speculations, your gayety is quickly overcast, and, though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleasantry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you, that I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life, when satiety of common diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes: congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness and the increase of their estate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without control; and except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or China dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendence of her son's education; and when my father at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she should not suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she never knew any boys at a grammar-school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at the table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning; for indeed he had known very few students that had not some stiffness in their manner. They therefore agreed that a domestic tutor should be procured, and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom, having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission, to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burdensome an employment; for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismission, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many a scholar, five years older than myself, have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff box, or received an empty tea cup.

At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded: the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice; and invited by a thousand oblique solicitations, my attendance to the playhouse, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness, nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches; and another whispered that he wondered why Miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place

The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find that, though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gayety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

No. 110.] SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex.
Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris.
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS

We through this maze of life one Lord obey;
Whose light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss:
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain.

F. LEWIS

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or punished by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of Divine favour, therefore constitute a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least show the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the Divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for, though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection, or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom he must consider as a governor, too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and therefore the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness, to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside; and animated to new attempts and firmer perseverance, those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty, when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel some inclination towards exterior acts and ritual observances. Ideas not represented by sensible objects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by some certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once establish the necessary proportion between crimes and sufferings, might securely rest upon his performance of the expiation; but, while safety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid lest he should decide too soon in his own favour, lest he should not have felt the pangs of true contrition; lest he should mistake satiety for detestation, or imagine that his passions are subdued when they are only sleeping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence arose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposition to confound penance with repentance, to repose on human determinations, and to receive from some judicial sentence the stated and regular assignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without resource; we seek in the knowledge of others a succour for our own ignorance, and are ready to trust any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain by some outward marks the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules, corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended*

God. Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the Divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evidence, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions; and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the fathers, that *he who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abstinence, if nothing more, is, at least, a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terror must naturally precede reformation; for what other cause can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory of his past faults, may justly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the Divine presence, as may overpower the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation.

> What better can we do, than prostrate fall
> Before him reverent; and there confess
> Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
> Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
> Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
> Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

No. 111.] TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1751.

φρονεῖν γὰρ οἱ ταχεῖς οὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς. SOPHOC.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

It has been observed by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the most part liberally recompensed by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts, and nocturnal frosts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the germ, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring naturally forces my attention, to learn, from the great process of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprise and hope: having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel: whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is past.

A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recall the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be borne at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet, since the fear of missing what we seek, must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognostieate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens that applause abates diligence. Whoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his forces to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he conceives inexhaustible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be accounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniences of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the Supreme Benefactor; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependance. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed, the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome, and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

No. 112.] Saturday, April 13, 1751.

In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipse meas. OVID.

Of strength pernicious to myself I boast;
The powers I have were given me to my cost.
F. LEWIS.

We are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantities and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity; and since we cannot adjust every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company which perhaps similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts his faculties, and makes a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratification of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotic softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, show us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy: for it is the privilege only of deep reflection or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended beyond the instincts of animal life; but, unhappily, he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessation of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood; and in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependance on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and, as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of sentiment: and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that after six years

the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him; the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are embittered by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendence of domestic trifles. Eriphile has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass and wainscoat from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcilable enemy to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lightest addition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies, or offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least: some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles, we must let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obstruct his improvement.

X

No. 113.] TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1751.

——Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?
Dic qua Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris?
JUV.

A sober man like thee to change his life!
What fury would possess thee with a wife!
DRYDEN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I KNOW not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat censure with contempt. We owe so much reverence to the wisdom of mankind, as justly to wish, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of others' suffrages; and since guilt and infamy must have the same effect upon intelligences unable to pierce beyond external appearance and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a false charge, lest we should countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accusation with supercilious silence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villany, and inspirited by innocence. The wall of brass which Horace erects upon a clear conscience, may be sometimes raised by impudence or power; and we should always wish to preserve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedness cannot assume.

For this reason I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust; but will lay my case honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolutions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

I am one of those unhappy beings, who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are settled, pin-money secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained; but am at last doomed by general consent to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother as a man whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raises hopes only to embitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become mistresses and mothers.

I hope you will think, that some part of this penal severity may justly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet professed love to a woman without sincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination

changed, but to preserve her whom I was leaving from the shock of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of seeming to discard me; and that I never forsook a mistress for a larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but because I discovered some irregularity in her conduct, or some depravity in her mind; not because I was charmed by another, but because I was offended by herself.

I was very early tired of that succession of amusements by which the thoughts of most young men are dissipated, and had not long glittered in the splendour of an ample patrimony before I wished for the calm of domestic happiness. Youth is naturallydelighted with sprightliness and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the sighs of my first affection at the feet of the gay, the sparkling, the vivacious Ferocula. I fancied to myself a perpetual source of happiness in wit never exhausted, and spirit never depressed; looked with veneration on her readiness of expedients, contempt of difficulty, assurance of address, and promptitude of reply; considered her as exempt by some prerogative of nature from the weakness and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myself upon a companion superior to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Ferocula, in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness and puerile levity; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at an end; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might at any time mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link to the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a-week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and vigilance which the superintendence of a family demands, observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants, and told me that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best storekeeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new improvements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced, that, whatever I might suffer from Sophronia, I should escape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, *fair* and *softly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to entreat my interest for a reconciliation to her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoise-shell comb; she had attended her lady from a distant province, and having not lived long enough to save much money, was destitute among strangers, and though of a good family, in danger of perishing in the streets, or of being compelled by hunger to prostitution. I made no scruple of promising to restore her; but upon my first application to Sophronia, was answered with an air which called for approbation, that if she neglected her own affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting mine; that the comb stood her in three half crowns; that no servant should wrong her twice; and that indeed she took the first opportunity of parting with Phillida, because, though she was honest, her constitution was bad, and she thought her very likely to fall sick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it surely may be forgiven me, if on this occasion, I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was disengaged by finding that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our sentiments. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young; and another, because, to increase her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

I shall in another letter give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

No. 114.] Saturday, April 20, 1751.

——*Audi,*
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est.
JUV.

——When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate. DRYDEN.

Power and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and exposed to danger as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as to decline them. Even those that have most reverence for the laws of right, are pleased with showing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and, as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by public wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of public happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those who crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For, who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frightened into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief, and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order, and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly increasing, yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrific punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardon; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and sanguinary justice.

Yet since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havoc of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, *τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, of dreadful things the most dreadful;* an evil beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands with blood; but when by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred, and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be observed, that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour. From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly, disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to

the reformation of their associates, than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful, or less extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptations to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence, and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe, every thief will confess, that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, because he knew, that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape, than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform, and some will prosecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death; especially when he remembers that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of public justice are indeed strong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the public, could it be supported only by my own observations. I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

No. 115.] Tuesday, April 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.
JUV

Some faults, though small, intolerable grow.
DRYDEN

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

I sit down, in pursuance of my late engagement, to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befell me in my long quest of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been so happy as to obtain it, I have at least endeavoured to deserve by unwearied diligence, without suffering from repeated disappointments any abatement of my hope, or repression of my activity.

You must have observed in the world a species of mortals who employ themselves in promoting matrimony, and without any visible motive of interest or vanity, without any discoverable impulse of malice or benevolence, without any reason but that they want objects of attention and topics of conversation, are incessantly busy in procuring wives and husbands. They fill the ears of every single man and woman with some convenient match; and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner for life, with the same readiness, and the same indifference, as a salesman, when he has taken measure by his eye, fits his customer with a coat.

It might be expected that they should soon be discouraged from this officious interposition by resentment or contempt; and that every man should determine the choice on which so much of his happiness must depend, by his own judgment and observation; yet it happens, that as these proposals are generally made with a show of kindness, they seldom provoke anger, but are at worst heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity, and sometimes by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by these Hymeneal solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcass; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from the success of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager and equally industrious.

An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends, made me, by a concerted chance, acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected that I should be suddenly and irresistibly en

slaved. The lady whom the same kindness had brought without her own eoneurrenee into the lists of love, seemed to think me at least worthy of the honour of eaptivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with so mueh art and spirit, that though I had been too often deeeived by appearanees to devote myself irrevoeably at the first interview, yet I eould not suppress some raptures of admiration, and flutters of desire. I was easily persuaded to make nearer approaehes; but soon diseovered that a union with Camilla was not much to be wished. Camilla professed a boundless eontempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinenee of her own sex; and very frequently expressed her wonder that men of learning or experience eould submit to trifle away life with beings ineapable of solid thought. In mixed companies she always associated with the men, and deelared her satisfaetion when the ladies retired. If any short excursion into the eountry was proposed, she eommonly insisted upon the exclusion of women from the party; beeause, where they were admitted, the time was wasted in frothy eompliments, weak indulgenees, and idle eeremonies. To show the greatness of her mind, she avoided all eompliance with the fashion; and to boast the profundity of her knowledge, mistook the various textures of silk, confounded tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribands by wrong names. She despised the eommerce of stated visits, a farce of empty form without instruction; and eongratulated herself, that she never learned to write message eards. She often applauded the noble sentiment of Plato, who rejoieed that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of Swift's opinion, that women are only a higher species of monkeys; and confessed, that when she eonsidered the behaviour, or heard the conversation of her sex, she eould not but forgive the Turks for suspeeting them to want souls.

It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked, by this insolenee, all the rage of hatred, and all the perseeutions of ealumny; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger and female eunning. Well, said she, has nature provided that sueh virulence should be disabled by folly, and sueh cruelty be restrained by impotenee.

Camilla doubtless expeeted, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk baek at her approaeh. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and at best reeeived by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself a while with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the eommon order of nature ean be long borne. I had no inelination to a wife who had the ruggedness of a man without his force, and the ignoranee of a woman without her softness; nor eould I think my quiet and honour to be intrusted to sueh audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien, and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from those with whom ehance had brought her into company. In Nitella I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or altereation. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my eourtship, by observing that her apartments were superstitiously regular; and that, unless she had notiee of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious eleanliness whieh I have always noted as the characteristie of a slattern; it is the superfluous serupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspieion; it is the violence of an effort against habit, whieh being impelled by external motives, eannot stop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than eleganee; and seldom eould forbear to discover by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore eoneluded, that being only oeeasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many eompetitors for the fame of eleanliness, that it is not hard to gain informa tion of those that fail, from those that desire to excel; I quiekly found, that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and slippers, when she was not deeorated for immediate show.

I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it eame within her reach. I thought myself quiekly made happy by permission to attend her to publie places, and pleased my own vanity with imagining the envy which I should raise in a thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis. She soon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom whieh she had never seen. I solieited the happiness of aecompanying her, whieh, after a short reluetance, was indulged me. She had no other euriosity on her journey, than after all possible means of expense; and was every moment taking oeeasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to proeure.

After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion; at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the playhouse, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was sueh, that there never was a show, to whieh she did not summon me on the second day; and as she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the priee of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often eharmed with some trinket in the toyshops; and, from moderate desires of seals and snuff-boxes, rose, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too eostly for a private purse, and added one more to six-and-forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

Imperia then took possession of my affeetions, but kept them only for a short time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having spent the earlier part of her life in the perusal of romanees, brought with her into the gay world all

the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands. Time might indeed cure this species of pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning, and vitiated only by false representations: but the operations of time are slow; and I therefore left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in error at her own expense.

Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. RAMBLER, it is not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady unstained with the spots which I have been describing; at least, I am resolved to pursue my search; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state; and if, after all these miscarriages, I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you shall hear once more from

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

No. 116.] SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus.
HOR.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough.—— FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I WAS the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. My father having by his marriage freed the estate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He therefore spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the country for the discipline of his hounds. But, above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he had so much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could rest in security; and game of whatever species, that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his shot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chace, and, at an age when other boys are *creeping like snails unwillingly to school*, he could wind the horn, beat the bushes, bound over hedges, and swim rivers. When the huntsman one day broke his leg, he supplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the scut in his hat, amidst the acclamations of the whole village. I being either delicate or timorous, less desirous of honour, or less capable of sylvan heroism, was always the favourite of my mother; because I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles; and did not come home, like my brother, mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horse, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuse her self with books, and being much inclined to despise the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, disdained to learn their sentiments or conversation, and had made no addition to the notions which she had brought from the precincts of Cornhill. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the succession of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at Guildhall; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies' feasts by men, of whom some are now made aldermen, some have fined for sheriffs, and none are worth less than forty thousand pounds. She frequently displayed her father's greatness; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country-house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and dignity of London, and of trade. I therefore devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man seldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty.* They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants' accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and, with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of showing it, that, without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with respect by the only men, whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter-bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the

riband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critic in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers, when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But unhappily, at the first public table, to which I was invited, appeared a student of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth, to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot; but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then new amongst them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect; and therefore resolved, when we met again, to rouse my spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very successfully with a minute representation of my lord mayor's show, when the colonel entered careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the same attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language: and by one or other the company was so happily amused, that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence than that I put round the glass, and was in my turn permitted to name the toast.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket needs not care what any man says of him; that if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine, when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year These and many more such consolations and encouragements I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for having by some accident heard, that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I could not find any possibility of rising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulness and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard with my former elevation those compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me upon my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *Young Man*, with which I was sometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my person, and sullen in my temper; often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence.

My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour; and, therefore, after some expostulation, posted me in the warehouse, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the sixth year of my servitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and with the hearty consent of my master commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by Sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

No. 117.] TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1751.

Ὄσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη. HOM.

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies:
Heaved on Olympus, tottering Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of pe-

tulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silkworm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others foresaw the tumult which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus, or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, *ἀνεμῶν πνεόντων τὴν ηχὼ προσκύνει*; "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cum fuderit auster,
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing showers!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, as an early writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him.

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.

——'Tis sweet thy labouring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazines of learning fortified;
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.

DRYDEN.

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established;

Causa latet: res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known

ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aërial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated invariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of a universal practice, there must still be presumed a universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising

ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious, aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gayety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer than that he who towers to the fifth story is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and, therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniences of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but in his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth: and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil's climate in some lines of his Georgic: so when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft. HYPERTATUS.

No. 118.] SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1751.

——Omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte. HOR.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown.
FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of Scipio, to depreciate those honours for which he himself appears to have panted with restless solicitude, by showing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope for from men is circumscribed.

"You see," says Africanus, pointing at the earth, from the celestial regions, "that the globe assigned to the residence and habitation of human beings, is of small dimensions: how then can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory worthy of a wish? Of this little world the inhabited parts are neither numerous nor wide; even the spots where men are to be found are broken by intervening deserts, and the nations are so separated as that nothing can be transmitted from one to another. With the people of the south, by whom the opposite part of the earth is possessed, you have no intercourse; and by how small a tract do you communicate with the countries of the north? The territory which you inhabit is no more than a scanty Island, inclosed by a small body of water, to which you give the name of the great sea and the Atlantic ocean. And even in this known and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will pass the stream of Ganges, or the cliffs of Caucasus? or by whom will your name be uttered in the extremities of the north or south, towards the rising or the setting sun? So narrow is the space to which your fame can be propagated, and even there how long will it remain?"

He then proceeds to assign natural causes, why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration; he observes the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares that, according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a show of discouraging the pursuit of fame; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom. Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary resolved, at least, that he

should die with honour; and therefore brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a Divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superior beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alleges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version, will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantic sea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsiderable; and where neither benefit nor mischief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing? So those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand, why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observation, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventurers of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry: curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsmen and the men of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horse-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard; the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiast, all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the valleys of life no voice but that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name as a usurpation of their time; all who are too much or too little pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, "we raise our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without giving up our hearts to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow."

No. 119.] Tuesday, May 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra. HOR.

Faults lay on either side the Trojan towers.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

As, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never therefore thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who trust are certainly betrayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Those who are convinced, that no reason for preference can be found, will never harass their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will resolve, since they are doomed to misery, that no needless anxiety shall disturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand that shall be held toward them.

That the world is over-run with vice cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally escape a greater evil by suffering a less; and therefore, those who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, should be careful to inculcate the possibility of virtue and happiness, and to encourage endeavours by prospects of success.

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are the sentiments of one who has been subject for many years to all the hardships of antiquated virginity; has been long accustomed to the coldness of neglect, and the petulance of insult; has been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries after forgotten fashions, games long disused, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the second wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquettes in whispers intended to be heard: and been long considered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wise for pleasure. It is indeed natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against my pride and my resentment, that I have preserved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect sentences against marriage; nor am inclined to lessen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obstructing that happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in censures of the forwardness and indiscretion of girls, or the inconstancy, tastelessness, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by necessity, but induced by observation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, swells some of those hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to solitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gayety amidst the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applause; been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain; and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gayety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief, and without malice.

When my name first began to be inscribed upon glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who, being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonness of expense, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in in his person, and easy in his address; and, therefore, soon gained upon my eye at an age when the sight is very little over-ruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing: but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions: and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, music, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for a while pleased with the care which Venustulus discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by daylight for fear of robbers. This extraordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me; but fear is too strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could scarcely refrain from screams and outcries at any accidental surprise. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street was a cry of fire. I have seen him lose his colour when my squirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away with my fan a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a husband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungosa, the son of a stock-jobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungosa was no very suitable companion; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds;

nor had any means of raising merriment, but by telling how somebody was over-reached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of grovelling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards six months without any particular notice, but at last became the idol of the glittering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleasure the cock of every hat, and the sleeve of every coat that appeared in fashionable assemblies. Flosculus made some impression upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my skill in dress, my judgment in suiting colours, and my art in disposing ornaments. But Flosculus was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be sufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to please with varied praise an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and stayed away three days, because I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that Flosculus was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we should probably live in a perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spend our lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

I had soon after the honour at a feast of attracting the eyes of Dentatus, one of those human beings whose only happiness is to dine. Dentatus regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of measures that he had laid for procuring the best cook in France, and entertained me with bills of fare, prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and taught me two sauces invented by himself. At length, such is the uncertainty of human happiness, I delared my opinion too hastily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead a while in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering that they had no taste or knowledge in music; three I dismissed, because they were drunkards; two, because they paid their addresses at the same time to other ladies; and six, because they attempted to influence my choice by bribing my maid. Two more I discarded at the second visit for obscene allusions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I sentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me settlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for representing falsely the value of their estates; three, for concealing their debts; and one, for raising the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have now sent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. I mean not to depreciate the sex which has produced poets and philosophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not suffer the rising generation of beauties to be dejected by partial satire; or to imagine that those who censured them have not likewise their follies and their vices. I do not yet believe happiness unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inseparable union. It is necessary to expose faults, that their deformity may be seen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either sex to be condemned because some women, or men, are indelicate or dishonest.

I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

No. 120.] SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraaten,
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus. HOR.

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profess'd,
Disdains to number with the bless'd
Phraates, by his slaves adored,
And to the Parthian crown restored.

FRANCIS.

IN the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of the east, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physic: they filled his apartments with alexipharmics, restoratives, and essential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son, and, dismissing his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility of man; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed: His root, she cried, is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines against his

trunk, and prosperity dances on his top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate; look upon me, and attend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted in gain; my house is splendid, my servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country; to have given seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance; but the hand of death is upon me; a frigorific torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched awhile with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborne with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expenses of other young men: he therefore believed that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uncasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion and disdained him: How, says she, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crowded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, "I have at last found the use of riches; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend?

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expense; but in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation; yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for jutisce or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses: and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them; and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee, that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted

thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless; there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them; they may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of Divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

No. 121.] TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1751.

O imitatores, servum pecus! HOR.

Away, ye imitators, servile herd! ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been informed by a letter from one of the universities, that among the youth from whom the next swarm of reasoners is to learn philosophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, who, instead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themselves with the secondary knowledge, which a convenient bench in a coffee-house can supply: and, without any examination or distinction, adopt the criticisms and remarks which happen to drop from those who have risen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge my correspondent stigmatizes with the name of Echoes; and seems desirous that they should be made ashamed of lazy submission, and animated to attempts after new discoveries, and original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious and severe. For as they seldom comprehend at once all the consequences of a position, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reasoners are restrained from confidence, they form their conclusions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarrass the question, they expect to find their own opinion universally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and hesitation to want of honesty, rather than of knowledge. I may perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correspondent, when it shall be found, that I have no inclination to persecute these collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the severity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of taking into protection those whom I think condemned without a sufficient knowledge of their cause.

He that adopts the sentiments of another, whom he has reason to believe wiser than himself, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praise and veneration; for to learn is the proper business of youth; and whether we increase our knowledge by books or by conversation, we are equally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with abilities to construct systems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the schools of art, of being able to comprehend what others discover, and to remember what others teach. Even those to whom Providence hath allotted greater strength of understanding, can expect only to improve a single science. In every other part of learning, they must be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine: and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can seldom add more than some small particle of knowledge to the hereditary stock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than such as arises from new methods of distribution, or new arts of illustration, the necessity of following the traces of our predecessors is indisputably evident; but there appears no reason why imagination should be subject to the same restraint. It might be conceived, that of those who profess to forsake the narrow paths of truth, every one may deviate towards a different point, since, though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity, may be infinitely diversified. The roads of science are narrow, so that they who travel them, must either follow or meet one another; but in the boundless regions of possibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are surely a thousand recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers unplucked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, combinations of imagery yet unobserved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet, whatever hope may persuade, or reason evince, experience can boast of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of Troy, and the travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all succeeding poets with incidents, characters, and sentiments. The Romans are confessed to have attempted little more than to display in their own tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There is, in all their writings, such a perpetual recurrence of allusions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they must be confessed often to want that power of giving pleasure which novelty supplies; nor can we wonder that they excelled so much in the graces of diction, when we consider how rarely they were employed in search of new thoughts.

The warmest admirers of the great Mantuan poet can extol him for little more than the skill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the Iliad and the Odyssey in one composition; yet his judgment was perhaps sometimes overborne by his avarice of the Homeric treasures; and, for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor Ajax, who, when the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his

own hand in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, his loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praises and submission; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminently beautiful; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immoveable constancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known but by gloomy sullenness, and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally shown by silence, more contemptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets Dido the queen of Carthage, whom his perfidy has hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like Ajax in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might, without any departure from the tenor of her conduct, have burst out, like other injured women, into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but Virgil had his imagination full of Ajax, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; and accordingly we find that, besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time, all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another, they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spenser, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spenser can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction as his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vicious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Jonson boldly pronounces him to have written no language. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spenser are indeed not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude that, when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since the time of Spenser, as the character of Hector is violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrase, though it is easy to sprinkle it with gleamings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the style of Spenser might by long labour be justly copied; but life is surely given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

No. 122.] SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1751.

Nescio quâ natale solum dulcedine cunctos Ducit.
OVID.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the easiness or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performances of others, or from abstracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation. We are therefore more powerfully excited to emulation, by those who have attained the highest degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by a previous consideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. It is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise the series of any process with all its circumstances, incidents and variations, in a speculative scheme. Experience soon shows us the tortuosities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothness. Sudden difficulties often start up from the ambushes of art, stop the career of activity, repress the gayety of confidence, and, when we imagine ourselves almost at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different measures.

There are many things which we every day see others unable to perform, and perhaps have even

ourselves miscarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afresh at every new failure, or to promise certainty of success to our next essay; but when we try, the same hindrances recur, the same inability is perceived, and the vexation of disappointment must again be suffered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writing, which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, none appear so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such an endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion. When we have congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of inquiry, and new means of information, it often happens that without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relator fills the ear with empty sounds, harasses the attention with fruitless impatience and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The philosopher has the works of omniscience to examine; and is therefore engaged in disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his inventions, and is not only in danger of those inconsistencies to which every one is exposed by departure from truth; but may be censured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of disposition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy historian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treasure for his use. He has only the actions and designs of men like himself to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconsistency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety inconsistent, or uniting probability with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the manners and actions of his personages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his powers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages, very few in any age have been able to raise themselves to reputation by writing histories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their ancestors, or undertake to transmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity and disgust delicacy.

It is observed, that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and, so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenor of imagination which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of Raleigh is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to select facts rather than adorn them; and has produced a historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The works of Clarendon deserve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words and involving one clause and sentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude, inartificial majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance swells the mind by its plenitude and diffusion. His narration is not perhaps sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing is amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellences that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken, in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or

fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer, who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

No. 123.] Tuesday, May 21, 1751.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu. HOR.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste.
CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Though I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet, how determinately soever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with discontent, when they found that Misocapelus had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the desire of gratifying the expectations that I have raised, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promised it, I think myself no longer at liberty to forbear. For, however I may have wished to clear myself from every other adhesion of trade, I hope I shall be always wise enough to retain my punctuality, and amidst all my new arts of politeness, continue to despise negligence, and detest falsehood.

When the death of my brother had dismissed me from the duties of a shop, I considered myself as restored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my ancestors obtained. I was, however, embarrassed with many difficulties at my first re-entrance into the world; for my haste to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate measures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old station, was considered by me as an obstruction of my happiness.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions still daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices sometimes pulling me by the sleeve as I was walking in the street, and, without any terror of my new sword, which was, notwithstanding, of an uncommon size, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old house, and entertaining me with histories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal state, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that, to fright away these unwelcome familiarities, nothing was necessary, but that I should, by splendour of dress, proclaim my re-union with a higher rank. I therefore sent for my tailor; ordered a suit with twice the usual quantity of lace; and, that I might not let my persecutors increase their confidence, by the habit of accosting me, staid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I passed in practising a forbidding frown, a smile of condescension, a slight salutation, and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with so much levity and sprightliness, that I made no doubt of discouraging all public attempts upon my dignity. I therefore issued forth in my new coat, with a resolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter distance; and pleased myself with the timidity and reverence, which I should impress upon all who had hitherto presumed to harass me with their freedoms. But, whatever was the cause, I did not find myself received with any new degree of respect: those whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their usual phrases of benevolence; and those, whose acquaintance I solicited, grew more supercilious and reserved. I began soon to repent the expense, by which I had procured no advantage, and to suspect that a shining dress, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itself, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to suffer in my initiation to politeness. I was so much tortured by the incessant civilities of my companions, that I never passed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at last left my lodgings, and fixed myself in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman just returned from his travels, and was pleased to have my landlord believe that I was in some danger from importunate creditors; but this scheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation sent to offer me, though I had now retired from business, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the public walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not observe, without wonder, as I passed by them, how frequently they were talking of a tailor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady, whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I indeed sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practice my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned in a short time the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similes, and con-

trasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed, which I did not understand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At last a malignant author, whose performance I had persecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon Tape the critic, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My desire to be a fine gentleman still continued: I therefore, after a short suspense, chose a new set of friends at the gaming-table, and was for some time pleased with the civility and openness with which I found myself treated. I was indeed obliged to play; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never surprised into large sums. What might have been the consequence of long familiarity with these plunderers I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the constables entered and seized us, and I was once more compelled to sink into my former condition, by sending for my old master to attest my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I should aspire, I was summoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to distinguish myself, and to support the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horses, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increased the salary of the huntsman. But when I entered the field, it was soon discovered that I was not destined to the glories of the chase. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marsh; I shivered on the brink of a river while the sportsmen crossed it, and trembled at the sight of a five-bar gate. When the sport and danger were over, I was still equally disconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly-whispering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, soon recalled me to domestic pleasures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but, wherever I came, there was always some unlucky conversation upon ribands, fillets, pins, or thread, which drove all my stock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with shame and dejection.

Thus I passed the ten first years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at last to repress that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, instead of wasting more of my life in vain endeavours after accomplishments, which if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I shall confine my care to those higher excellences which are in every man's power, and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and ease, hope to secure esteem by honesty and truth. I am, &c. MISOCAPELUS.

No. 124.] SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1751.

——Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.
HOR.

To range in silence through each healthful wood,
And muse what's worthy of the wise and good.
ELPHINSTON.

THE season of the year is now come, in which the theatres are shut, and the card-tables forsaken; the regions of luxury are for awhile unpeopled, and pleasure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to still scenes and erratic gratifications. Those who have passed many months in a continual tumult of diversion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon some new appointment; nor slept at night without a dream of dances, music, and good hands, or of soft sighs and humble supplications; must now retire to distant provinces, where the syrens of flattery are scarcely to be heard, where beauty sparkles without praise or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of social benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aside, or by preparatory measures be more easily endured, I cannot feel the increasing warmth, or observe the lengthening days, without considering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has so long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accustomed to hope for delight; and who, till fashion proclaims the liberty of returning to the seats of mirth and elegance, must endure the rugged 'squire, the sober housewife, the loud huntsman, or the formal parson, the roar of obstreperous jollity, or the dulness of prudential instruction; without any retreat but to the gloom of solitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniences, and must learn, however unwillingly, to endure themselves.

In winter the life of the polite and gay may be said to roll on with a strong and rapid current; they float along from pleasure to pleasure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and pursue the course of the stream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themselves in progression, and careless whither they are going. But the months of summer are a kind of sleeping stagnation without wind or tide, where they are left to force themselves forward by their own labour, and to direct their passage by their own skill; and where, if they have not some internal principle of activity, they must be stranded upon shallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, some to whom this universal dissolution of gay societies affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without disgrace, the post which they have found themselves unable to maintain; and of seeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from assemblies where, after a short triumph of uncontested superiority, they are overpowered by some new intruder of softer elegance or sprightlier vivacity. By these, hopeless of victory, and yet ashamed to confess a conquest, the summer is regarded as a release from the fatiguing service of celebrity, a dismission to more certain joys and a safer empire. They now solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall effuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They imagine, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rustics will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in unactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from those exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard to love or beauty; and visits either tropic at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of public resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtship, submission, and applause, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praise of ignorance, and the subjection of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyrics. Nor indeed should the powers which have made havoc in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble contest with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routs, no shows, no ridottos; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon? The Platonists imagine, that the future punishment of those who have in this life debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitations of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorific radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the Platonic penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose, and the hand of avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example; and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary to struggle with habit, and abandon fashion. To these many arts of spending time might be recommended, which would neither sadden the present hour with weariness, nor the future with repentance.

It would seem impossible to a solitary speculatist, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midst of a world filled with variety, perpetually pressing upon the senses and irritating curiosity, is surely a sufficient security against the languishment of inattention. Novelty is indeed necessary to preserve eagerness and alacrity; but art and nature have stores inexhaustible by human intellects; and every moment produces something new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent observation.

Some studies, for which the country and the summer afford peculiar opportunities, I shall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future essay; but if there be any apprehension not apt to admit unaccustomed ideas, or any attention so stubborn and inflexible, as not easily to comply with new directions, even these obstructions cannot exclude the pleasure of application; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, sincerely and regularly performed, will always be sufficient to exalt the meanest, and to exercise the highest understanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by stated duties to meditations on eternal interests; nor can any hour be long, which is spent in obtaining some new qualification for celestial happiness.

No. 125.] TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1751.

Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque poeta salutor. HOR.

But if, through weakness, or my want of art,
I can't to every different style impart
The proper strokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name? FRANCIS.

IT is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; every thing is set above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffused in their relations, and the performances of art are too inconsistent and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impossible to impress upon our minds an adequate and just representation of an object so great, that we can never take it into our view, or so mutable, that it is always changing under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticisms than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction, and burst the enclosures of regularity. There is, therefore, scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and improved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; though perhaps they might properly have contented themselves with declaring it to be *such a dramatic representation of human life, as*

may excite mirth, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comic writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men; some think that its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatic composition which raises mirth is comic: and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary, that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite that the action should be trivial, nor ever, that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatic poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinctions, have unhappily confounded tragic with comic sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfall of kingdoms, and the route of armies. They have not considered, that thoughts or incidents, in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and absurd, will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs, by an intermixture of an unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

"Comedy," says Horace, "sometimes raises her voice; and Tragedy may likewise on proper occasions abate her dignity;" but as the comic personages can only depart from her familiarity of style, when the more violent passions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy should never descend to trifle, but in the hours of ease, and intermissions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of Don Sebastian, when the King of Portugal is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of Afric, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moloch. What shall I do to conquer thee?
Seb. Impossible!
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll show thee for a monster through my Afric.
Seb. No, thou canst only show me for a man:
Afric is stor'd with monsters; man's a prodigy
Thy subjects have not seen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou mistak'st,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Minister. Sure, he would sleep.

This conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comic, because it wants the probability necessary to representations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat.

——No more replies,
But see thou dost it; Or——

To which Dorax answers,

Choke in that threat: I can say Or as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in Aureng-Zebe sufficient to exemplify it. Indamora, a captive queen, having Aureng-Zebe for her lover, employs Arimant, to whose charge she had been entrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry her message to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand;* INDAMORA

Arim. And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue:
You lay commands both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.
Ind. You first betray'd your trust in loving me:
And should not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.
Arim. I'll to the king, and straight my trust resign.
Ind. His trust you may, but you shall never mine
Heaven made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confidant and friend:
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write:
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.
Arim. *I ask not Heaven my freedom to restore.*
[Reading
But only for your sake——I'll read no more.
And yet I must——
Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad——
[Reading
Another line like this, would make me mad.——
Heaven! she goes on—yet more—and yet more kind!
[*As reading*
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night—— [Reading
Thank fortune, who did such a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant shall be your guide.
Not only to be made an instrument,
But pre-engaged without my own consent!
Ind. Unknown t' engage you still augments my score
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
Arim. The best of men
Some interest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess:
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your best advice
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late:
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, Heaven! thou hast been wondrous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery design'd,
And yet am cheated with a free born mind,
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute. [*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient; the contemptible subjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter only because it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and free-will; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his rea

son to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents and polluted its most serious interlocutions, with buffoonery and meanness: but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The latter tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. The perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures, which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

No. 126.] SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1751.

—Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta.
VET. AUCT.

Sands form the mountain, moments make the year.
YOUNG.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

AMONG other topics of conversation which your papers supply, I was lately engaged in a discussion of the character given by Tranquilla of her lover Venustulus, whom, notwithstanding the severity of his mistress, the greater number seemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

One of the company remarked, that prudence ought to be distinguished from fear; and that if Venustulus was afraid of nocturnal adventures, no man who considered how much every avenue of the town was infested with robbers could think him blameable; for why should life be hazarded without prospect of honour or advantage? Another was of opinion, that a brave man might be afraid of crossing the river in the calmest weather, and declared that, for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be seen tottering in a wooden case, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overset by accident or negligence, or by the force of a sudden gust, or the rush of a larger vessel. It was his custom, he said, to keep the security of day-light, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wise man ever perished by water, or was lost in the dark.

The next was humbly of opinion, that if Tranquilla had seen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, she would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his safety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not ashamed to confess, that he could not see a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven six times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the closet for his servant, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man should think himself disgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a possibility that a dog might be mad; and that surely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wisdom in flight than contest. By all these declarations another was encouraged to confess, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addresses to Tranquilla, he should have been likely to incur the same censure; for, among all the animals upon which nature has impressed deformity and horror, there is none whom he durst not encounter rather than a beetle.

Thus, Sir, though cowardice is universally defined too close and anxious an attention to personal safety, there will be found scarcely any fear, however excessive in its degree, or unreasonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterise a coward. Fear is a passion which every man feels so frequently predominant in his own breast, that he is unwilling to hear it censured with great asperity; and, perhaps, if we confess the truth, the same restraint which would hinder a man from declaiming against the frauds of any employment among those who profess it, should withhold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

Yet since fortitude is one of those virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly necessary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than against superfluous and panic terrors. Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil; but its duty, like that of other passions is not to overbear reason, but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to raise phantoms of horror, or beset life with supernumerary distresses.

To be always afraid of losing life is, indeed, scarcely to enjoy a life that can deserve the care of preservation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at rest. Our present state admits only of a kind of negative security; we must conclude ourselves safe when we see no danger, or none inadequate to our powers of opposition. Death indeed continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unseen, unless we sharpen our sight by useless curiosity.

There is always a point at which caution, however solicitous, must limit its preservatives, because one terror often counteracts another. I once knew one of the speculatists of cowardice, whose reigning disturbance was the dread of house-breakers. His inquiries were for nine years employed upon the best method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour has he spent in establishing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at last, by the daily superaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced; for one bar was secured by another with such intricacy of subordination that he was himself not always able to disengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification, till being asked how he would escape if he was threatened by fire, he discovered, that, with all his care and expense, he had only been assisting his own destruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly perish in the flames.

There is one species of terror which those who

are unwilling to suffer the reproach of cowardice have wisely dignified with the name of *antipathy*. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monsters of the wilderness while they are out of sight, will readily confess his *antipathy* to a mole, a weazel, or a frog. He has indeed no dread of harm from an insect or a worm, but his *antipathy* turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will transport him with as much safety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his *antipathy* to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies *antipathies*, till he becomes contemptible to others, and burdensome to himself.

It is indeed certain, that impressions of dread may sometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themselves justly formidable; but when fear is discovered to be groundless, it is to be eradicated like other false opinions, and *antipathies* are generally superable by a single effort. He that has been taught to shudder at a mouse, if he can persuade himself to risk one encounter, will find his own superiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conquest.

I am, Sir, &c.

THRASO.

SIR,

As you profess to extend your regard to the minuteness of decency, as well as to the dignity of science, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of persecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houses, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

Among the ladies who please themselves with splendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice very common to ask every guest how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapestry; the china at the table, or the plate on the side-board; and on all occasions to inquire his opinion of their judgment and their choice. Melania has laid her new watch in the window nineteen times, that she may desire me to look upon it. Calista has an art of dropping her snuff-box by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I may admire it; and Fulgentia has conducted me by mistake into the wrong room, at every visit I have paid since her picture was put into a new frame.

I hope, Mr. Rambler, you will inform them, that no man should be denied the privilege of silence, or tortured to false declarations; and that though ladies may justly claim to be exempt from rudeness, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To please is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honest praise; but to seize applause by violence, and call out for commendation without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a species of tyranny by which modesty is oppressed, and sincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the respect paid to silent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

I am, &c.

MISOCOLAX.

SIR,

YOUR great predecessor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuse among his female readers a desire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not seem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to discourage them from any laudable pursuit. But however either he or you may excite our curiosity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world seems to have formed a universal conspiracy against our understandings; our questions are supposed not to expect answers, our arguments are confuted with a jest, and we are treated like beings who transgress the limits of our nature whenever we aspire to seriousness or improvement.

I inquired yesterday of a gentleman eminent for astronomical skill, what made the day long in summer, and short in winter; and was told that nature protracted the days in summer, lest ladies should want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, lest they should not have hours sufficient to spend at the card-table.

I hope you do not doubt but I heard such information with just contempt, and I desire you to discover to this great master of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I asked the question with no other intention than to set him free from the necessity of silence, and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite assembly, from which however uneasy, he could not then escape, by a kind introduction of the only subject on which I believed him able to speak with propriety.

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

No. 127.] TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1751.

Cœpisti melius quam desinis: ultima primis
Cedunt: dissimiles, hic vir, et ille puer.

OVID

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy;
Thou, who began'st a man, wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But, whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who, at their first entrance into the world, were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniences of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit, may be compared to the progress of a body driven by a blow. It moves for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the first impulse is perpetually decreasing, and, though it should encounter no obstacle capable of quelling it by a sudden stop, the resistance of the medium through which it

passes, and the latent inequalities of the smoothest surface, will, in a short time, by continued retardation, wholly overpower it. Some hindrances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a distance, necessarily loses sight of all that fills up the intermediate space, and therefore sets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor suspects a thousand obstacles by which he afterwards finds his passage embarrassed and obstructed. Some are indeed stopped at once in their career by a sudden shock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the cross impulse of some violent passion; but far the greater part languish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight obliquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at what time their ardour forsook them, or when they lost sight of their original design.

Weariness and negligence are perpetually prevailing by silent encroachments, assisted by different causes, and not observed till they cannot, without great difficulty, be opposed. Labour necessarily requires pauses of ease and relaxation, and the deliciousness of ease commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourselves to renew our attempts, but eagerly listen to every argument for frequent interpositions of amusement; for, when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking, with a false opinion of its facility, or too high conceptions of his own strength, is easily discouraged by the first hindrance of his advances, because he had promised himself an equal and perpetual progression, without impediment or disturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where he purposed only to bask in the calm, or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprise greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborne by clamour; that, in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and considered every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the public, has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid, and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that, from those who desire to be considered as his admirers, nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A man thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides carelessly and idle down the current of life, without resolution to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulf of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of Hannibal, that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he should know how to use it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, are often fatal to men of impetuous desire, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who, having borne opposition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early persuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may pass the rest of their days in the enjoyment of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their own superiority, and in attention to their own praises, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not sufficiently considered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accomplish, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who stops at any point of excellence is every day sinking in estimation, because his improvement grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated, imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorse; for if the spendthrift's poverty be embittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembering that he once had lustre!

These errors all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a Master

who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial clations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

No. 128.] Saturday, June 8, 1751.

Αἰὼν δ' ἀσφαλὴς
Οὐκ ἐγένετ', οὐτ' Ἀκακίδα παρὰ Πηλεῖ;
Οὔτε παρ' ἀντιθέῳ
Κάδμῳ· λέγονταί γε μὰν βρότων
Ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον ὅτι
Σχεῖν. PINDAR.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,
E'er yet had happiness complete;
Nor Peleus, grandson of the sky,
Nor Cadmus scaped the shafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the Powers on high,
With every bliss that man can gain.

The writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil; that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as reason to hypothetical systems, can be persuaded by the most specious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleasures and vexations, and external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations, what another would feel in the same circumstances.

If the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own estate, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and distresses? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we all are placed in an elysian region, overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their understanding, to possess either more than they deserve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasiness, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads distraction over half the commercial world, assembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and shakes the nerves of a thousand stockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope and fear, and steals away the night and day from every other pleasure or employment, is regarded by them whose passions time has extinguished, as an amusement, which can properly raise neither joy nor sorrow, and, though it may be suffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, should always give way to prudence or interest.

He that never had any other desire than to fill a chest with money, or to add another manor to his estate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be astonished to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curiosity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wish but to speak what was never spoken before; who, if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in treating those who will hear them talk; and, if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes, for the pleasure of making others laugh! How slowly would he believe that there are men who would rather lose a legacy than the reputation of a distich; who think it less disgrace to want money than repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a contest of raillery is sometimes sufficient to deprive of sleep; and who would esteem it a lighter evil to miss a profitable bargain by some accidental delay, than not to have thought of a smart reply till the time of producing it was past! How little would he suspect that this child of idleness and frolic enters every assembly with a beating bosom, like a litigant on the day of decision, and revolves the probability of applause with the anxiety of a conspirator, whose fate depends upon the next night; that at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a show of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depressed with disappointment; and immures himself in his closet, that he may disencumber his memory at leisure, review the progress of the day, state with accuracy his loss or gain of reputation, and examine the causes of his failure or success?

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and restless anxieties, by which female happiness is particularly disturbed. A solitary philosopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and sorrow lulled in perpetual quiet, and feasted with unmingled pleasure; for, what can interrupt the content of those, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours, and accumulate immunities; those to whom rudeness is infamy, and insult is cowardice; whose eye commands the brave, and whose smile softens the severe; whom the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and science, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingness to be pleased?

Surely among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must

have fixed her residence; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life must always move either to the slow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniences by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please, as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are indeed some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of Catullus wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of Brussels, may be torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex, and every condition: all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever therefore finds himself inclined to envy another, should remember that he knows not the real condition which he desires to obtain, but is certain that, by indulging a vicious passion, he must lessen that happiness which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

No. 129.] TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1751.

——Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes:
Possidet en terras, et possidet æquora, Minos.
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire
Da venium cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo. OVID.

Now Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand;
Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land
The skies are open—let us try the skies;
Forgive great Jove, the daring enterprise.

MORALISTS, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of error, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topics of moral declamation may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorific wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger, which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity; and, according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed; but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed: the care therefore of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of presupposing impossibilities and anticipating frustra-

tion, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interests from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger: but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish: but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudice of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that *Power is never far from necessity.* The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have reposited in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain, that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

No. 130.] SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1751.

Non sic prata novo vere decentia
Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor,
Sævit solstitio cum medias dies;——
Ut fulgor teneris qui rodiat genis
Momento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit.
Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili? SENECA.

Not faster in the summer's ray
The spring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguish and decay consume
The smiling virgin's rosy bloom,
Some beauty's snatch'd each day, each hour,
For beauty is a fleeting flower:
Then how can wisdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride? ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have very lately observed, that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before our eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or, without the help of some female speculatist, be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face, but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with

a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle; she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle: but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk, lest I should swell my ankle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep till I had passed through the cosmetic discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and May dews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples, and clear discolourations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks: but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellences as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered as necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a public night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the mantua-makers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion, of equal glory, with a command to show that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received, like other pleasing novelties, with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet, when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement, and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet-step with a new French dancing-master and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year; if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated, by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflection, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty; and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if by publishing this you show any regard for the correspondence of,

Sir, &c. VICTORIA.

No. 131.] TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1751.

——Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices; miseros fuge. Sidera cœlo
Ut distant, flamma mari, sic utile recto. LUCAN.

Still follow where auspicious fates invite;
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight.
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than interest with right.
LEWIS.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amidst the innumerable varieties of inclination, that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring, than in the wish for riches; a wish indeed so prevalent, that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind are only subordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth therefore all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependents, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still, either by birth or acquisition, possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleasure, which may be combined with endless diversity; as the essential and necessary substance of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the steeps of labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompense of long toil, and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures: the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falsehood; and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover that riches always procure protection for themselves, that they dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celebrity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour, and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining by every accession of advantage an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold, by an old epigrammatist, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow.* There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is lost among mankind, that no man ventures to act where money can be endangered upon the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is concluded, with all their appendages of seals and attestation, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who

must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and public evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or a settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcilcable with the laws of virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tendencies, and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon, than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristics of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of possessions: strife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent passion was stilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but such times can return no more. Community of possession must include spontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incites to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In latter ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured their peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But, by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good: they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness; and, though they have forborne to injure society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happiness.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only against reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety.

No. 132.] SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1751.

——Dociles imitandis
Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus. JUV.

The mind of mortals, in perverseness strong
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS bred a scholar, and after the usual course of education, found it necessary to employ for the support of life that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative professions drew my regard with equal attraction; each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

There is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited inquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise and the mind fluctuates between different purposes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often spent the first hours of the day in considering to what study I should devote the rest; and at last snatched up any author that lay upon the table, or perhaps fled to a coffee-house for deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less, till I was roused from my literary slumber by a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum, that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of distress, and obliged to endeavour after some certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their last acre in a drawer, and, without the least interruption of their tranquillity, or abatement of their expenses, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to such dignity of imprudence, or such exaltation above the cares and necessities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might set me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out some final scheme of lasting advantage.

My friends were struck with honest solicitude, and immediately promised their endeavours for my extrication. They did not suffer their kindness to languish by delay, but prosecuted their inquiries with such success, that in less than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of prospects.

I had however no time for long pauses of consideration; and therefore soon resolved to accept the office of instructing a young nobleman in the house of his father: I went to the seat at which the family then happened to reside, was received with great politeness, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were such as I should willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the respect with which I was treated flattered my vanity; and perhaps the splendour of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the proposals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no desire to gain more than I should truly deserve, I very diligently prosecuted my undertaking, and had the satisfaction of discovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wise and useful counsellor to the state, though my labours were somewhat obstructed by want of authority, and the necessity of com

plying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man whose imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a studious life had made all the common amusements insipid and contemptible, it was not very easy to suppress his indignation, when he saw himself forsaken in the midst of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an insect, and found his instructions debarred from access to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childish frolic, or the desire of a new plaything.

Those vexations would have recurred less frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he should be excused from his task as a reward for some petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herself or her visitants with his vivacity, shown him that every thing was more pleasing and more important than knowledge, and that study was to be endured rather than chosen, and was only the business of those hours which pleasure left vacant, or discipline usurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of these frequent avocations; but was answered, that rank and fortune might reasonably hope for some indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progress would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; that with the success which satisfied every body else, I might surely satisfy myself. I had now done my duty, and without more remonstrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they would be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my scholar began to feel the quick impulses of curiosity, and the honest ardour of studious ambition.

At length it was resolved to pass a winter in London. The lady had too much fondness for her son to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuse her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the public. I remonstrated against too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to show him the world; nothing was more a brand of meanness than bashful timidity; gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent intercourse with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, that he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of the ladies, without the readiness of reply, and activity of officiousness, remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in London.

Again I found resistance hopeless, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat, was immediately dazzled with a thousand beams of novelty and show. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleasure that passed before him, and it was impossible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the sounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was disturbed by a rich suit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accustomed to a plain dress, he could not at first survey without ecstacy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more distant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiscriminately introduced to all, that he might accustom himself to change of faces, and be rid with speed of his rustic diffidence. He soon endeared himself to his mother by the speedy acquisition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes sparkle at a numerous assembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other test of principles or actions than the quality of those to whom they are ascribed. He begins already to look down on me with superiority, and submits to one short lesson in a week, as an act of condescension rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot speak French; and having formerly learned a few familiar phrases from his sister's governess, he is every day soliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his conversation. I am not yet insulted, but find myself likely to become soon a superfluous incumbrance, for my scholar has now no time for science or for virtue; and the lady yesterday declared him so much the favourite of every company, that she was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 133.] TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1751.

Magna quidem sacris quæ dot præcepta libellis
Victrix fortunæ sapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,
Nec jactare jugum vita didicere magistra. JUV.

Let Stoics ethics' haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance:
Yet happy those, though not so learn'd are thought,
Whom life instructs, who by experience taught
For new to come from past misfortunes look,
Nor shake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis shook.
CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have shown, by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of Victoria not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philosopher: I shall therefore continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun

or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstacy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemn me to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetic science was exhausted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blast of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleasure, and her nights with hope; all that gave gladness to the present hour, or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal inanity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent desire; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced in a short time to venture abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies, where I had lately sparkled with gayety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence; but the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgment; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependence, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own; and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance, and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement; and the evening closed in its natural gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to me-

lancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she, "my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by Providence, from those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your calamity a small part is the infliction of Heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may indeed sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use; you have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substantiate more valuable and more durable excellences. Consider yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools." I am, Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

No. 134.] SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1751.

Quis scit, an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ
Tempora Dii superi? HOR.

Who knows if Heaven, with ever-bounteous power,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?

FRANCIS.

I SAT yesterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various subjects that occurred to my imagination, I should bestow the paper of to-day. After a short effort of meditation, by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irresolute, my ideas wandered from the first intention, and I rather wished to think, than thought, upon any settled subject; till at last I was awakened from this dream of study by a summons from the press; the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purposing to provide, and, however dubious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to write.

Though to a writer whose design is so comprehensive and miscellaneous, that he may accommodate himself with a topic from every scene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was however some pleasure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or resolution recover the opportunities which have slipped away; and who are condemned by their own carelessness to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we know cannot be finally escaped, is one of the general weaknesses, which, in spite of the instruction of moralists, and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind; even they, who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of the passions, always renewing its attacks, and, though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When therefore any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and are easily persuaded, that the moment of necessity which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolution which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep, and reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is, by the continual contemplation of misery, hourly impaired; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion: we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity, without the conflicts of doubt, and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetic punishment, was somewhat to be pitied because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success; or the frequent failure of irresolute struggles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress by degrees false terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity, such as, if they are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrors, and embitter life not only with those

miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with those which do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties, merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard; and though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful by devoting them to the great business of his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities, and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and possibilities of improvements, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependant and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and, since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true that no diligence can ascertain success, death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking, has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

No. 135.] TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1751.

Cœlum, non animum mutant.— HOR.

Place may be changed; but who can change his mind?

IT is impossible to take a view on any side, or observe any of the various classes that form the great community of the world, without discovering the influence of example, and admitting with new conviction the observation of Aristotle, *that man is an imitative being*. The greater, far the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curiosity after new discoveries, or ambition of trusting themselves to their own conduct. And of those who break the ranks and disorder the uniformity of the march, most return in a short time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and steady satisfaction of security before the frolics of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In questions difficult or dangerous it is indeed natural to repose upon authority, and, when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of those whom we do not in general think wiser than ourselves. Very few have abilities requisite for the discovery of abstruse truth; and of those few some want leisure, and some resolution. But it is not so easy to find the reason of the universal submission to precedent where every man might safely judge for himself; where no irreparable loss can be hazarded, nor any mischief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful passions are not awakened; the mere pleasure of acknowledging no superior might produce slight singularities, or the hope of gaining some new degree of happiness awaken the mind to invention or experience.

If in any case the shackles of prescription could be wholly shaken off, and the imagination left to act without control, on what occasion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure, of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the smiles of liberty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the reason, are regulated by credulity; and that most will feel, or say that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when almost every one, considerable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earnestness of distress to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of speedy departure or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to inquire what happiness is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this stated recession? Of the birds of passage, some follow the summer, and some the winter, because they live upon sustenance which only summer or winter can supply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to assign the reason, because they do not appear either to find or seek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of these fugitives may have heard of men whose continual wish was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to steal away from observation, to for

sake the crowd and delight themselves with the *society of solitude*. There is indeed scarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happiness of rural privacy, and delighted himself and his reader with the melody of birds, the whisper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets: nor any man, eminent for extent of capacity, or greatness of exploits, that has not left behind him some memoriais of lonely wisdom and silent dignity.

But almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble. Those who thus testified their weariness of tumult and hurry, and hasted with so much eagerness to the leisure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the pressure of difficult employment, harassed with importunities, and distracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engrossed by speculative sciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the public, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation. The naturalist was unhappy where the works of Providence were not always before him. The reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solitude very few of those who are now hastening from the town, have any pretensions to plead in their own justification, since they cannot pretend either weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and, after having trifled in public, to sleep in secrecy. The utmost that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculousness to obscurity, and the privilege of having fewer witnesses to a life of folly. He who is not sufficiently important to be disturbed in his pursuits, but spends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or desires, can have nothing to demand of shades and valleys. As bravery is said to be a panoply, insignificancy is always a shelter.

There are, however, pleasures and advantages in a rural situation, which are not confined to philosophers and heroes. The freshness of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhausted variety which summer scatters upon the earth, may easily give delight to an unlearned spectator. It is not necessary that he who looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower should study the principles of vegetation, or that the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems should be compared before the light of the sun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itself a source of gratification; and Milton justly observes, that to him who has been long pent up in cities, no rural object can be presented which will not delight or refresh some of his senses.

Yet even these easy pleasures are missed by the greater part of those who waste their summer in the country. Should any man pursue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them listening to Philomel, loitering in the woods, or plucking daisies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruscations of declining day. Some will be discovered at a window by the road side, rejoicing when a new cloud of dust gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary supply of conversation, and a short relief from the tediousness of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houses as in the rest of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new street in London might have given them. The same set of acquaintances still settle together, and the form of life is not otherwise diversified than by doing the same things in a different place. They pay and receive visits in the usual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the same tattle, and dance with the same partners; nor can they, at their return to their former habitation, congratulate themselves on any other advantage, than that they have passed their time like others of the same rank; and have the same right to talk of the happiness and beauty of the country, of happiness which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to subsist upon its own stock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed understandings so fertile and comprehensive, that they can always feed reflection with new supplies, and suffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amusements; as some cities have within their own walls enclosed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a siege.—But others live only from day to day, and must be constantly enabled, by foreign supplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and stupidity. Such could not indeed be blamed for hovering within reach of their usual pleasure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their facultics contracted by their own fault. But let not those who go into the country, merely because they dare not be left alone at home, boast their love of nature, or their qualifications for solitude; nor pretend that they receive instantaneous infusions of wisdom from the Dryads, and are able, when they leave smoke and noise behind, to act, or think, or reason for themselves.

No. 136.] SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει
HOMER.

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart detests him as the gates of hell.—
POPE

THE regard which they whose abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the rest of mankind, arises in a great measure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by misers or by robbers; but the honours of a lasting name, and the veneration of distant ages, only

the sons of learning have the power of bestowing. While, therefore, it continues one of the characteristics of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the search after happiness, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, and entrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought to summon all his fortitude to the support of his dignity with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice.—To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republic of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion; and all are so far influenced by a sense of reputation, that they are often restrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have lost their power; nor can any species of prostitution promote general depravity more than that which destroys the force of praise, by showing that it may be acquired without deserving it, and which by setting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets loose the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatness is controlled.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation, or animate enterprise. It is therefore not only necessary, that wickedness, even when it is not safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues.

Had these maxims been universally received, how much would have been added to the task of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhausted. How few of these initial panegyrics had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the distinct species and degree of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the name of the last man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of some of his domestics the privilege of addressing him, or in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and, after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philosophy has assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedication: for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and, without shame or scruple, celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppressive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulteration, however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why should he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the shame of falsehood?—The unhappy dedicator is seldom without some motives which obstruct, though not destroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppressed by miseries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by showing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach; the celebration of those virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our own defects, and show that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expense, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long inquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may, by a diligent solicitor, be surprised in the hour of weakness, and persuaded to solace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the music of flattery.

To censure all dedications as adulatory and servile would discover rather envy than justice. Praise is the tribute of merit, and he that has incontestably distinguished himself by any public performance has a right to all the honours which the public can bestow. To men thus raised above the rest of the community, there is no need that the book or its author should have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deserve respect, is sufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the same regard from particular persons, private virtue and less conspicuous excellence may be sometimes entitled. An author may with great propriety inscribe his work to him by whose encouragement it was undertaken, or by whose liberality he has been enabled to prosecute it, and he may justly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to rescue merit from obscurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te cludere: misce
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus. MART.

Thus much I will indulge thee for thy ease,
And mingle something of our times to please.
DRYDEN, jun.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblameably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praises only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatness, be cautious lest his desire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to please ourselves with the future than the past, and, while we luxuriate in expectation, may be easily persuaded to purchase what we yet rate, only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views of personal regard can discharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithstanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be justly proposed to the imitation of others, and whom therefore he must find some other way of rewarding than by public celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of seducement, but it surely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or persuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many, upon false principles of gratitude, have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the species, and whom they would likewise have beheld with the same scorn, had they not been hired to dishonest approbation.

To encourage merit with praise, is the great business of literature; but praise must lose its influence, by unjust or negligent distribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with misapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with squandering on guilt the recompense of virtue.

No. 137.] TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1751.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.
HOR.

——Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme. CREECH.

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention, with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect, ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labour of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment, without any effort to animate inquiry, or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanic art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other, that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands, that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the most active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued, if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated: the most lofty fabrics of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labour, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with greatest reason promise themselves victory are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labour, is to expect a peculiar privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence or the heights inaccessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes of literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings, perhaps, some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and

attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves.—Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools, as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

Books, says Bacon, *can never teach the use of books*. The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastic professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction.—They therefore step out from their cells into the open world with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider that, though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions, about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions, may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and therefore no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed, as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be lost; for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendour but retains his magnitude, and pleases more though he dazzles less.

No. 138.] SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1751.

O tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura
Atque humiles habitare casas, et figere cervos.
VIRG.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural sports.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and busy part of mankind, is justified by daily observation, since most of those who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I suppose you do not intend to represent the practice itself as ridiculous, or to declare that he whose condition puts the distribution of his time into his own power, may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, displays the inexhaustible varieties of nature, and supplies the philosophical mind with matter for admiration and inquiry, never was denied; but my curiosity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an insect, or the structure of a nest; I am generally employed upon human manners, and therefore fill up the months of rural leisure with remarks on those who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently visit those regions of negligence and liberty, they might diversify their representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are for the most part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse, as angular bodies, and uneven surfaces, lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of fashion, the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But in the country every man is a separate and independent being: solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy, and wealth, removed from the mortification of comparison,

and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to show itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without inquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds or demolishes, opens or encloses, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of those who are skilled in perspective or architecture, it is sufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor spends his own money on his own grounds.

For this reason it is not very common to want subjects for rural conversation. Almost every man is daily doing something which produces merriment wonder or resentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from restraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and suffers the natural character to diffuse itself to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of public observation, would have been only vented among servants and domestics, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province, and, instead of terminating in the destruction of China ware and glasses, ruins tenants, dispossesses cottagers, and harasses villagers with actions of trespass and bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that, even without violent passions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a rustic life produce remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reside, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the same cut and colour; another for shaking hands with those that visit her; and a third for her unshaken resolution never to let tea or coffee enter her house.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none so worthy of attention as that of Mrs. Busy, a widow, who lost her husband in her thirtieth year, and has since passed her time at the manor-house in the government of her children, and the management of the estate.

Mrs. Busy was married at eighteen from a boarding-school, where she had passed her time, like other young ladies, in needle work, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When she became a bride she spent one winter with her husband in town, where having no idea of any conversation beyond the formalities of a visit, she found nothing to engage her passions; and when she had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and seen the Monument, the Tombs and the Tower, she concluded that London had nothing more to show, and wondered that when women had once seen the world they could not be content to stay at home. She therefore went willingly to the ancient seat, and for some years studied housewifery under Mr. Busy's mother, with so much assiduity, that the old lady, when she died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a soup-dish, two beakers, and a chest of table linen spun by herself.

Mr. Busy, finding the economical qualities of his lady, resigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never visited his estates, but to destroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed such devastations in the range of pleasure, that some of his tenants refused to hold their lands at the usual rent. Their landlady persuaded them to be satisfied, and entreated her husband to dismiss his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and corn consumed by his horses, and remonstrances against the insolence of the huntsman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntsman was too necessary to his happiness to be discarded; and he had still continued to ravage his own estate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by shooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a consumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. Busy was too much an economist to feel either joy or sorrow at his death. She received the compliments and consolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which she stole privately every night and morning to see the cows milked; and, after a few days, declared that she thought a widow might employ herself better than in nursing grief: and that, for her part, she was resolved that the fortunes of her children should not be impaired by her neglect.

She therefore immediately applied herself to the reformation of abuses. She gave away the dogs, discharged the servants of the kennel and stable, and sent the horses to the next fair, but rated at so high a price that they returned unsold. She was resolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They lost their sleekness and grace, and were soon purchased at half the value.

She soon disencumbered herself from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarse apron, and short petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which she takes the management wholly upon herself. She rises before the sun to order the horses to their geers, and sees them well rubbed down at their return from work; she attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nursed; she walks out among the sheep at noon, counts the lambs, and observes the fences, and where she finds a gap, stops it with a bush till it can be better mended. In harvest she rides a-field in the wagon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leisure hours she looks goose eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheese.

When respect or curiosity brings visitants to her house, she entertains them with prognostics of a scarcity of wheat, or a rot among the sheep, and always thinks herself privileged to dismiss them when she is to see the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the roost.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom she has taught nothing but the lowest household duties. In my last visit I met Miss Busy carrying grains to a sick cow, and was entertained with the accomplishments of her eldest son, a youth of such early maturity, that, though he is only sixteen, she can trust him to sell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though some-

what tanned in making hay, was busy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal share.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed, by the absurd prudence of their mother, to ignorance and meanness; but, when I recommended a more elegant education, was answered, that she never saw bookish or finical people grow rich, and that she was good for nothing herself till she had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-school.

I am yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

No. 139.] TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1751.

——Sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.
HOR.

Let every piece be simple and be one.

IT is required by Aristotle to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," says he, "is that which has nothing necessarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally consequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or at least according to the common course of things, succeeds something else, but which implies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is connected on one side to something that naturally goes before, and on the other to something that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critic, for the disposition of the different parts of a well-constituted fable. It must begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repose, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate passages must join the last effect to the first cause, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing must be therefore inserted which does not apparently arise from something foregoing, and properly make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rigour only with respect to great and essential events, and cannot be extended in the same force to minuter circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy, as they contribute more to the main design; for it is always a proof of extensive thought and accurate circumspection, to promote various purposes by the same act; and the idea of an ornament admits use, though it seems to exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milton, *to build the lofty rhyme*, must acquaint himself with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be solid as well as beautiful; that nothing stand single or independent, so as that it may be taken away without injuring the rest; but that, from the foundation to the pinnacles, one part rest firm upon another.

This regular and consequential distribution is, among common authors, frequently neglected; but the failures of those, whose example can have no influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it of much use to recall obscure and unregarded names to memory for the sake of sporting with their infamy. But if there is any writer whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellences, is a task equally useless with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his preparations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of "Paradise Lost," and opposed, with all the confidence of triumph, to the dramatic performances of other nations. It contains indeed just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism: and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known.

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun and shade;
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me.—
—O wherefore was my birth from heaven foretold
Twice by an angel?—
—Why was my breeding order'd and prescribed,
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captived, and both my eyes put out
—Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength, committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me
Under the seat of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of Divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and, being shown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the ignominy which his religion suffers, by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow.

——Thou bear'st
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains:
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their god, who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetic confidence.

Samson. ——God, be sure,
Will not connive or linger thus provoked,
But will arise and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me.
Manoah. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer,
To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Delilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions, and is no more seen nor heard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson.

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated:

Haraph.——Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
Incredible to me; in this displeased
That I was never present in the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed fields:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walked about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and embittered by contemptuous insults on the other, Harapha retires; we then hear it determined, by Samson and the chorus, that no consequence good or bad will proceed from their interview:

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.
Sams. He must allege some cause, and offered fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords, assembled at the festival of Dagon, with a summons by which Samson is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, dismisses him with a firm and resolute refusal; but, during the absence of the messenger, having awhile defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of Providence.

Sams. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life,
By some great act, or of my days the last.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams of horror and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself.

——Those two massy pillars,
With horrible confusion, to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath.——
——Samson, with these immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut of, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

No. 140.] SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1751.

——*Quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,*
Ut non hoc fateatur? HOR.

What doting bigot, to his faults so blind,
As not to grant me this, can Milton find?

IT is common, says Bacon, to desire the end without enduring the means. Every member of society feels and acknowledges the necessity of detecting crimes; yet scarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to secure an informer from public hatred. The learned world has always admitted the usefulness of critical disquisitions, yet he that attempts to show, however modestly, the failures of a celebrated writer, shall surely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiousness and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I shall proceed to examine the sentiments of Milton's tragedy, which, though much less liable to censure than the disposition of his plan, are, like those of other writers, sometimes exposed to just exceptions for want of care, or want of discernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they consist more or less with the character and circumstances of the person to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the composition in which they are found, or with the settled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragic poets to introduce their persons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not possibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly-discovered regions often display their skill in European learning. The god of love is mentioned in

Tamerlane with all the familiarity of a Roman epigrammatist; and a late writer has put Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a Turkish statesman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philosophers or anatomists.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the ancient eastern nations, and his invention, which required no assistance from the common cant of poetry, have preserved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned Chalybean steel, of which it is not very likely that his chorus should have heard, and has made Alp the general name of a mountain, in a region where the Alps could scarcely be known:

> No medicinal liquor can assuage,
> Nor breath of cooling air from snowy Alp.

He has taught Samson the tales of Circe, and the Syrenes, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with Delilah:

> ——I know thy trains,
> Tho' dearly to my cost, thy gins and toils;
> Thy fair *enchanted cup* and *warbling charms*,
> No more on me have power.

But the grossest error of this kind is the solemn introduction of the phœnix in the last scene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the personage to whom it is ascribed, but as it is so evidently contrary to reason and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any serious poem:

> ——Virtue giv'n for lost,
> Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd
> Like that self-begotten bird
> In the Arabian woods embost
> That no second knows, nor third,
> And lay ere while a holocaust;
> From out our ashy womb now teem'd
> Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
> When most inactive deem'd.
> And tho' her body die, her fame survives,
> A secular bird ages of lives.

Another species of impropriety is the unsuitableness of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The seriousness and solemnity of tragedy necessarily reject all pointed or epigrammatical expressions, all remote conceits and opposition of ideas. Samson's complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural:

> As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
> To live a life half dead, a living death,
> And bury'd; but, O yet more miserable!
> Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave!
> Bury'd, yet not exempt,
> By privilege of death and burial,
> From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All allusions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is usually associated, are doubtless unsuitable to a species of composition which ought to be always awful though not always magnificent. The remark therefore of the chorus on good and bad news seems to want elevation:

> *Manoah.* A little stay will bring some notice hither,
> *Chor.* Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
> For evil news *rides post*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanness, that has least to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which, depending only upon sounds, lose their existence by the change of a syllable. Of this kind, is the following dialogue:

> *Chor.* But had we best retire? I see a *storm*.
> *Sams.* Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain
> *Chor.* But this another kind of tempest brings.
> *Sams.* Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
> *Chor.* Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
> The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
> Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,
> The giant Harapha.——

And yet more despicable are the lines in which Manoah's paternal kindness is commended by the chorus:

> Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons.
> Thou for thy son are bent to *lay out* all;——

Samson's complaint of the inconveniences of imprisonment is not wholly without verbal quaintness:

> ——I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
> The air, imprison'd also, close and damp.

From the sentiments we may properly descend to the consideration of the language, which, in imitation of the ancients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably simple and unadorned, seldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet sometimes metaphors find admission, even where their consistency is not accurately preserved. Thus Samson confounds loquacity with a shipwreck:

> How could I once look up, or heave the head,
> Who, like a foolish *pilot*, have *shipwreck'd*
> My *vessel* trusted to me from above,
> Gloriously *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
> Fool, have *divulg'd* the *secret gift* of God
> To a deceitful woman!——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report:

> He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
> Thy *words*, by *adding fuel to the flame?*

The versification is in the dialogue much more smooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity:

> Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
> That heroic, that renown'd,
> Irresistible Samson; whom unarmed
> No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
> Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid?——

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of Milton, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to display his excellences, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of those descriptions, similes, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so lavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger represen-

tation of the weariness of despondency, than in the words of Samson to his father:

——I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame;
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

The reply of Samson to the flattering Delilah affords a just and striking description of the stratagems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy:

——These are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail;
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses and again submits.

When Samson has refused to make himself a spectacle at the feast of Dagon, he first justifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having served the Philistines, by a very just distinction; and then destroys the common excuse of cowardice and servility, which always confound temptation with compulsion:

Chor. Yet with thy strength thou servest the Philistines.
Sams. Not in their idol worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful, to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.
Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds,
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging? the Philistine lords command.
Commands are no restraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind.

The complaint of blindness which Samson pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addressed to the passions and the fancy. The enumeration of his miseries is succeeded by a very pleasing train of poetical images, and concluded by such expostulations and wishes, as reason too often submits to learn from despair:

O first created beam, and thou great word
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave,
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself; if it be true,
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd,
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused
That she may look at will through every pore?

Such are the faults and such the beauties of Samson Agonistes, which I have shown with no other purpose than to promote the knowledge of true criticism. The everlasting verdure of Milton's laurels has nothing to fear from the blasts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to strengthen their shoots by lopping their luxuriance.

No. 141.] Tuesday, July 23, 1751.

Hilarisque, tamen cum pondere, virtus. STAT.

Greatness with ease, and gay severity.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Politicians have long observed that the greatest events may be often traced back to slender causes. Petty competition or casual friendship, the prudence of a slave, or the garrulity of a woman, have hindered or promoted the most important schemes, and hastened or retarded the revolutions of empires.

Whoever shall review his life will generally find that the whole tenor of his conduct has been determined by some accident of no apparent moment, or by a combination of inconsiderable circumstances, acting when his imagination was unoccupied, and his judgment unsettled; and that his principles and actions have taken their colour from some secret infusion, mingled without design in the current of his ideas. The desires that predominate in our hearts are instilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look upon the various scenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nursery or the school, invariably destined to the pursuit of great acquisitions, or petty accomplishments.

Such was the impulse by which I have been kept in motion from my earliest years. I was born to an inheritance which gave my childhood a claim to distinction and caresses, and was accustomed to hear applauses before they had much influence on my thoughts. The first praise of which I remember myself sensible was that of good-humour, which, whether I deserved it or not when it was bestowed, I have since made it my whole business to propagate and maintain.

When I was sent to school, the gayety of my look, and the liveliness of my loquacity, soon gained me admission to hearts not yet fortified against affection by artifice or interest. I was entrusted with every stratagem, and associated in every sport; my company gave alacrity to a frolic and gladness to a holiday. I was indeed so much employed in adjusting or executing schemes of diversion, that I had no leisure for my tasks, but was furnished with exercises, and instructed in my lessons by some kind patron of the higher classes. My master not suspecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindness would not punish nor his impartiality excuse, allowed me to escape with a slight examination, laughed at the pertness of my ignorance and the sprightliness of my absurdities, and could not forbear to show that he regarded me with such tenderness as genius and learning can seldom excite.

From school I was dismissed to the university, where I soon drew upon me the notice of the younger students, and was the constant partner of their morning walks and evening compotations. I was not indeed much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts, who wanted nothing but the dulness of a scholar, and might become eminent whenever he should condescend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with

negligence, and repressed my sallies with supercilious gravity; yet having natural good-humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out against the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muscles of disciplinarian moroseness, received me with smiles after an elopement, and that he might not betray his trust to his fondness, was content to spare my diligence by increasing his own.

Thus I continued to dissipate the gloom of collegiate austerity, to waste my own life in idleness, and lure others from their studies, till the happy hour arrived when I was sent to London. I soon discovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gayety, and was quickly distinguished as a wit by the ladies, a species of beings only heard of at the university, whom I had no sooner the happiness of approaching than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleasing them.

A wit, Mr. Rambler, in the dialect of ladies, is not always a man who by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehensive knowledge brings distant ideas unexpectedly together, who by some peculiar acuteness discovers resemblances in objects dissimilar to common eyes, or, by mixing heterogeneous notions, dazzles the attention with sudden scintillations of conceit, A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however easy it may seem, many gifts of nature and attainments of art must commonly concur. He that hopes to be received as a wit in female assemblies should have a form neither so amiable as to strike with admiration, nor so coarse as to raise disgust, with an understanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be despised. The other parts of the character are more subject to variation: it was formerly essential to a wit, that half his back should be covered with a snowy fleece; and at a time yet more remote, no man was a wit without his boots. In the days of the "Spectator" a snuff box seems to be indispensable; but in my time an embroidered coat was sufficient, without any precise regulation of the rest of his dress.

But wigs and boots and snuff boxes are vain, without a perpetual resolution to be merry, and who can always find supplies of mirth? Juvenal, indeed, in his comparison of the two opposite philosophers, wonders only whence an unexhausted fountain of tears could be discharged; but had Juvenal, with all his spirit, undertaken my province, he would have found constant gayety equally difficult to be supported. Consider, Mr. Rambler, and compassionate the condition of a man who has taught every company to expect from him a continual feast of laughter, an uninterrnitted stream of jocularity. The task of every other slave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the lexicographer at last finds the conclusion of his alphabet; only the hapless wit has his labour always to begin; the call for novelty is never satisfied, and one jest only raises expectation of another.

I know that among men of learning and asperity the retainers to the female world are not much regarded: yet I cannot but hope that, if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchased, you would look with some gratulation on our success, and with some pity on our miscarriages. Think on the misery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenness and ransack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is spent, to raise merriment without images, to harass his imagination in quest of thoughts which he cannot start, and his memory in pursuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; observe the effort with which he strains to conceal despondency by a smile, and the distress in which he sits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as their last refuge from silence and dejection.

It were endless to recount the shifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different species of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houses, and have often lived a week upon an expression, of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratic industry, I gleaned jests at home from obsolete farces. To collect wit was indeed safe, for I consorted with none that looked much into books, but to disperse it was the difficulty. A seeming negligence was often useful, and I have very successfully made a reply not to what the lady had said, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were so perverse as to rectify a mistake which had given occasion to a burst of merriment. Somctimes I drew the conversation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treasured up, like sportsmen who boast of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is however, in some happy moments, gained at less expense; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a series of quibbles, and made myself good company at another by scalding my fingers, or mistaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

These are artful deceits and useful expedients; but expedients are at length exhausted, and deceits detected. Time itself, among other injuries, diminishes the power of pleasing, and I now find, in my forty-fifth year, many pranks and pleasantries very coldly received, which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy necessity of supporting that character by study, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gayety must be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never please long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but esteemed for its usefulness.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

No. 142.] SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1751.

Ενθα δ' ἀνὴρ ἐνίαυε πελώριος—οὐδὲ, μέτ' ἄλλους
Πωλεῖτ'· ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἐὼν ἀθεμίστια ἤδη·
Καὶ γὰρ θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον, οὐδὲ ἐώκει
Ανερι σιτοφάγῳ. HOMER.

A giant shepherd here his flock maintains,
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclined:
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant county. As we were unwilling to travel

without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticised every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that by a progress so leisurely and gentle we missed the adventures of a post-chaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with the tumult of our passage, and of disguising our insignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house, was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence; some impatient to learn the news of the court in town, that they might be qualified by authentic information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

The civilities which he had received were soon to be returned; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations which are scattered over it. My pleasure would indeed have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone; but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniences; so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance, and the vigilance of officiousness.

In these rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. When I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice; for the length of the wall which inclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the canals of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that province. I therefore inquired as we rode by it, why we never, amongst our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendour and affluence? Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired was commonly called in the country the *haunted house*, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by daylight without danger. The danger, says he, is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not possible to converse without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted, but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not rest without a full account of this newly-discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by Captain Bluster, who served under Drake in the reign of Elizabeth; and the Blusters, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controlled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inspect the steward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was at the age of eighteen a complete master of all the lower arts of domestic policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and char-women.

By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was accumulated, and he found himself when he took his affairs into his own hands the richest man in the county. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year by an entertainment, at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the first tokens of his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentleman who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has at one time or other insulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often borne without resistance for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expenses without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows that where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

By the success of some of these disputes he has so elated his insolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suf-

fered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow, then in the pound by squire Bluster's order, who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under-rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children, and has now an old woman in the county-jail for a trespass which she committed, by coming into his ground to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has therefore a despotic authority in many families, whom he has assisted, on pressing occasions, with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy insults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obscenity.

He is of late somewhat less offensive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because by this indulgence he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

Such is the life of Squire Bluster; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute; his dependants dread him as an oppressor; and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated he is likewise feared.

I am, Sir, &c.

VAGULUS.

No. 143.] TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1751.

—Moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus.—— HOR.

Lest when the birds their various colours claim
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the public scorn.
FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy has taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a new composition can no longer be contested, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applause, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obscure, may be set at such a distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even when it is false, it may be sometimes urged with probability. Bruyere declares that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are preoccupied, and that description and sentiment have been long exhausted. It is indeed certain, that whoever attempts any common topic, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers; nor can the nicest judgment always distinguish accidental similitude from artful imitation. There is likewise a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblance generally observable among contemporaries. So that in books which best deserve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the disposition of materials already provided; the same ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the possession of other hands; and, by restoring to every man his own, as the Romans must have returned to their cots from the possession of the world, so the most inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predecessors only by furnishing himself with thoughts and elegances out of the same general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble from the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which being limited by nature, can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have in some degree that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity: and for palliatives of these incurable miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When therefore there are found in Virgil and Horace two similar passages:

Hæ tibi erunt artes——
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.—— VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.
DRYDEN.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hostem. HOR.

Let Cæsar spread his conquests far.
Less pleased to triumph than to spare.

it is surely not necessary to suppose with a late critic, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have on very different occasions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which perhaps occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise.

Nisi Ilias illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruisset.

Unless the Iliad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us with more energy that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion for want of a poet:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reigu'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave;
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown,
No bard had they to make all time their own.
FRANCIS.

Tully inquires, in the same oration, why, but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues?

Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?

Horace inquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim, with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

when our life is of so short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fragrance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Boethius by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers.

Quæ sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam mœstæ lacrymis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The powers of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compassion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound. F. LEWIS.

Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds.

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miserans, ait——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdued at length, Hell's pitying monarch cried,
The song rewarding, let us yield the bride.
F. LEWIS.

He sung, and Hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair

Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restor'd,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone.
F. LEWIS.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes;
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can scarcely be doubted, that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw:

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullas ipse reliquit opes——
Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos.
Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat.—OVID

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cried;
Even Homer left no riches when he died——
In verse spontaneous flowed my native strain,
Forced by no sweat or labour of the brain.
F. LEWIS

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.—POPE.

——This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man. CRASHAW

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man. POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising

from the coalition or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment:

Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old.
WALLER.

Unica lux sæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem.
GROTIUS.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you would pronounce him, nor a boy.
F. LEWIS.

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the Seventh.

For nought but light itself, itself can show,
And only kings can write, what kings can do.
ALLEYNE.

Your music's power, your music must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shows.
PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the same writer be censured for endeavouring the clandestine appropriation of a thought which he borrowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato:

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἔπει τοίη μὲν ὁρᾶσθαι
Οὐκ ἐθέλω, οἵη δ' ἦν πάρος, οὐ δύναμοι.

Venus take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day I shall be,
Venus, let me never see.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention: and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

No. 144.] SATURDAY, AUG. 3, 1751.

Daphnidis arcum
Frgisti et calamos: quæ tu, perverse Menalca,
Et cum vidisti puero donata, dolebas;
Et si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses.—VIRG.

The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke;
When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
And but for mischief, you had died for spite.
DRYDEN.

It is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it; unexpected opposition rises upon every side; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy; subtilty furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice, but by injuries; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another, but when some right of his own was involved in the question; that at least hostilities commenced without cause, should quickly cease; that the armies of malignity should soon disperse, when no common interest could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a rising character should be left to those who had something to hope or fear from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to eminence, would be much diminished if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, and what is of yet greater importance, would be known. But what caution is sufficient to ward off the blows of invisible assailants, or what force can stand against unremitted attacks, and a continual succession of enemies? Yet such is the state of the world, that no sooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the public upon him, than he stands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives in the tumult of hostility, from distant and from nameless hands, wounds not always easy to be cured.

It is probable that the onset against the candidates for renown is originally incited by those who imagine themselves in danger of suffering by their success; but, when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the standard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying squadrons are dispersed to every part, so pleased with an opportunity of mischief, that they toil without prospect of praise, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deserve distinction, he will be surprised to hear himself censured where he could not expect to have been named; he will find the utmost acrimony of malice among those whom he never could have offended.

As there are to be found in the service of envy men of every diversity of temper and degree of understanding, calumny is diffused by all arts and methods of propagation. Nothing is too gross or too refined, too cruel or too trifling to be practised; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hostility, but every weapon is accounted lawful, and those that cannot make a thrust at life are content to keep themselves in play with petty malevolence, to teaze with feeble blows and impotent disturbance.

But as the industry of observation has divided the most miscellaneous and confused assemblages into proper classes, and ranged the insects of the summer, that torment us with their drones or stings, by their several tribes; the persecutors of merit, notwithstanding their numbers may be likewise commodiously distinguished into Roarers, Whisperers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualification for a champion of controversy than a hardened front and strong voice. Having seldom so much desire to confute as to silence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjust one part of his accusation to another, to preserve decency in his language, or probability in his narratives. He has always a

store of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occasion may require, which by constant use he pours out with resistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he without hesitation devotes him to bankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with rustic deformity; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the understanding by which it must be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon those whom he compels to hear them; and though it will sometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous mistake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to suppress soon recover their former strength, as the trees that bend to the tempest erect themselves again when its force is past.

The Whisperer is more dangerous. He easily gains attention by a soft address, and excites curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets are not to be made cheap by promiscuous publication, he calls a select audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of trust by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that, though he seems to manage an extensive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately suffered much by an expensive project, and had a greater share than is acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by the storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, but that they who see her in a morning do not discover all those graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty, that though the excellence of the work be incontestable, he can claim but a small part of the reputation; that he owed most of the images and sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the style was produced by the successive correction of the chief critics of the age.

As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers; and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of Moderation. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He has heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and, after a diligent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business, being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time, without any final injury to their creditors; and what is lost by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements, but surely most of her beauties must be genuine, and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not sparkle with the fire of Homer, but who has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and, in his opinion, modesty is a quality so amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred by the public suffrage to petulant wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless, obstruct that worth which they cannot equal, and by artifices thus easy, sordid, and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

No. 145.] Tuesday, Aug. 6, 1751.

Non, si priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Ceæque et Alcæi minaces,
Stesichorique graves Camœnæ. HOR.

What though the muse her Homer throned
High above all th' immortal quire;
Nor Pindar's rapture she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cæan lyre:
Alcæus strikes the tyrant soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread. FRANCIS

It is allowed that vocations and employments of least dignity are of the most apparent use; that the meanest artisan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life than the profound scholar and argumentative theorist; and that the public would suffer less present inconvenience from the banishment of philosophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been so forcibly struck with this observation, that they have, in the first warmth of their discovery, thought it reasonable to alter the common distribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of universal ingratitude. For justice exacts, that those by whom we are most benefited should be most honoured. And what labour can be more useful than that which procures to families and communities those necessaries which supply the wants of nature, or those conveniences by which ease, security, and elegance, are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the first attempt to reduce them into practice certainly destroys. If we estimate dignity by immediate usefulness, agriculture is undoubtedly the first and noblest science; yet we see the plough driven, the clod broken, the manure spread, the seeds scattered, and the harvest reaped, by men whom those that feed upon their industry will never be persuaded to admit into the same rank with heroes or with sages; and who, after all the confessions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, must be content to fill up the lowest class of the commonwealth, to form the base of the pyramid of subordination, and lie buried in obscurity themselves, while they support all that is splendid, conspicuous, or exalted.

It will be found, upon a closer inspection, that

this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reason or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the usefulness and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjusted by comparison of the mental and corporeal abilities, which they appear to employ. That work, however necessary, which is carried on only by muscular strength and manual dexterity, is not of equal esteem, in the consideration of rational beings, with the tasks that exercise the intellectual powers, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious investigations of reason.

The merit of all manual occupations seems to terminate in the inventor; and surely the first ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; since those who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to secure themselves from cold and hunger, were numbered amongst their deities. But these arts once discovered by philosophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practised with very little assistance from the faculties of the soul; nor is any thing necessary to the regular discharge of these inferior duties, beyond that rude observation which the most sluggish intellect may practise, and that industry which the stimulations of necessity naturally enforce.

Yet though the refusal of statues and panegyric to those who employ only their hands and feet in the service of mankind may be easily justified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to justify the superciliousness of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderness and benevolence, which by the privilege of their common nature, one may claim from another.

That it would be neither wise nor equitable to discourage the husbandman, the labourer, the miner, or the smith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obscure and equally indigent, who, because their usefulness is less obvious to vulgar apprehensions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long exposed to insult without a defender, and to censure without an apologist.

The authors of London were formerly computed by Swift at several thousands, and there is not any reason for suspecting that their number has decreased. Of these only a very few can be said to produce, or endeavour to produce, new ideas, to extend any principle of science, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the rest, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be considered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have set up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and, like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the stated time.

It has been formerly imagined, that he who intends the entertainment or instruction of others, must feel in himself some peculiar impulse of genius; that he must watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in whichhis mind is elevated with nobler sentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with stronger comprehension; that he must carefully select his thoughts and polish his expressions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raising a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy shall be able to destroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend, have been too long *hacknied in the ways of men* to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have seldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried some other without success; they perceive no particular summons to composition, except the sound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the fashion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and about the opinion of posterity they have little solicitude, for their productions are seldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That such authors are not to be rewarded with praise is evident, since nothing can be admired when it ceases to exist; but surely, though they cannot aspire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted in that order of men which deserves our kindness, though not our reverence. These papers of the day, the Ephemeræ of learning, have uses more adequate to the purposes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is necessary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with past generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kingdoms, in which he has neither possessions nor expectations; if it be pleasing to hear of the preferment and dismission of statesmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes must be considered as a liberal dispenser of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger, compiler, and translator, though their labours cannot be ranked with those of the diurnal historiographer, yet must not be rashly doomed to annihilation. Every size of readers requires a genius of correspondent capacity; some delight in abstracts and epitomes, because they want room in their memory for long details, and content themselves with effects, without inquiry after causes; some minds are overpowered by splendour of sentiment, as some eyes are offended by a glaring light; such will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the sun in the water.

As every writer has his use, every writer ought to have his patrons; and since no man, however high he may now stand, can be certain that he shall not be soon thrown down from his elevation by criticism or caprice, the common interest of learning requires that her sons should cease from intestine hostilities, and, instead of sacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert persecution from the meanest of their fraternity.

No. 146.] SATURDAY, AUG. 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, tresve, qui revolvant
Nostrarum tineas ineptiarum;
Sed cum sponsio, fabulæque alassæ
De Scorpo fuerint, et Incitato. MART.

'Tis possible that one or two
These fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings must be o'er,
Nor Crab or Childers talk'd of more. F. LEWIS.

NONE of the projects or designs which exercise the mind of man are equally subject to obstructions and disappointments with the pursuit of fame.

Riches cannot easily be denied to them who have something of greater value to offer in exchange; he whose fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuse to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whose days are darkened by languor, or whose nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the science of healing. But praise may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity necessary to his happiness, he has put it in the power of the weakest and most timorous malignity, if not to take away his satisfaction, at least to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by silence; as the women of Rome threatened to put an end to conquest and dominion, by supplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burst upon mankind with unexpected lustre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controversy or inquiry, he is seldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praises. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in disguise to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feast upon admiration; composed to encounter censures without emotion; and determined not to suffer his quiet to be injured by a sensibility too exquisite of praise or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled conversation, sits down to his tea in an obscure corner, and while he appears to examine a file of antiquated journals, catches the conversation of the whole room. He listens, but hears no mention of his book, and therefore supposes that he has disappointed his curiosity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their conversation with such a wonderful novelty, they had digressed to other subjects before his arrival. The company disperses, and their places are supplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careless. The same expectation hurries him to another place, from which the same disappointment drives him soon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with restless curiosity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pickpocket; is told by some of an unexpected bankruptcy; by others of a turtle-feast; is sometimes provoked by importunate inquiries after the white bear, and sometimes with praises of the dancing-dog; he is afterward entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to see a foot-race in the adjacent villages; desired to read a ludicrous advertisement; or consulted about the most effectual method of making inquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is busied in affairs, which he thinks below the notice of reasonable creatures, and which are nevertheless sufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He resolves at last to violate his own modesty, and to recall the talkers from their folly by an inquiry after himself. He finds every one provided with an answer; one has seen the work advertised, but never met with any that had read it; another has been so often imposed upon by specious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is established; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after so many writers of greater eminence; the next has inquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore suspects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not understand.

Many are the consolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the understanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which solid knowledge, and delicate refinement, have given way to a low merriment, and idle buffoonery, and therefore no writer can hope for distinction, who has any higher purpose than to raise laughter. He finds that his enemies, such as superiority will always raise, have been industrious, while his performance was in the press, to vilify and blast it; and that the bookseller, whom he had resolved to enrich, has rivals that obstruct the circulation of his copies. He at last reposes upon the consideration, that the noblest works of learning and genius have always made their way slowly against ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation, which is never to be lost, must be gradually obtained, as animals of longest life are observed not soon to attain their full stature and strength.

By such arts of voluntary delusion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himself. It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any single man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly; and how soon it is clouded by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will easily outlive all noisy and popular reputation; he may be celebrated for a time by the public voice; but his actions and his name will soon be considered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by those whose alliance gives them some vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It seems not to be sufficiently considered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually busy by their fears or desires, and have not more leisure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themselves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving some refuge from calamity, or in shortening the way to some new possession, they seldom suffer their thoughts to wander to the past or future; none but a few solitary students have leisure to inquire into the claims of ancient heroes or sages; and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents, shrink at last into cloisters or colleges.

Nor is it certain, that even of these dark and narrow habitations, these last retreats of fame, the possession will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature, very few extend their views beyond some particular science, and the greater part seldom inquire, even in their own profession, for any authors but those whom the present

mode of study happens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulf of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect, that he must himself sink in like manner, and, as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens that fame begins when life is at an end: but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and since it is so difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is it to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or of friendship can scarcely support it?

No. 147.] TUESDAY, AUG. 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invita dices facieve Minerva. HOR.

——You are of too quick a sight,
Not to discern which way your talent lies.
ROSCOMMON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous persecution, which, though it produces no scenes of horror or of ruin, yet, by incessant importunity of vexation, wears away my happiness, and consumes those years which nature seems particularly to have assigned to cheerfulness, in silent anxiety and helpless resentment.

I am the eldest son of a gentleman, who having inherited a large estate from his ancestors, and feeling no desire either to increase or lessen it, has from the time of his marriage generally resided at his own seat; where, by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a master, and a magistrate, the study of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himself of the day, without any of those amusements, which all those with whom my residence in this place has made me acquainted, think necessary to lighten the burden of existence.

When my age made me capable of instruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at Oxford for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I saw him treated, disposed me to consider his instructions as important, and I therefore soon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering comparisons of my own proficiency with that of others, either less docile by nature, or less happily forwarded by instruction. I was caressed by all that exchanged visits with my father; and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themselves, began to think that close application was no longer necessary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amusement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praise and admiration.

While I was thus banqueting upon my own perfections, and longing in secret to escape from tutorage, my father's brother came from London to pass a summer at his native place. A lucrative employment which he possessed, and a fondness for the conversation and diversions of the gay part of mankind, had so long kept him from rural excursions, that I had never seen him since my infancy. My curiosity was therefore strongly excited by the hope of observing a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a distance.

From all private and intimate conversation, I was long withheld by the perpetual confluence of visitants with whom the first news of my uncle's arrival crowded the house; but was amply recompensed by seeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the stratagems of endearment, the gradations of respect, and variations of courtesy. I remarked with what justice of distribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what address he offered to every man an occasion of indulging some favourite topic, or displaying some particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his inquiries after the absent; and the care with which he showed all the companions of his early years how strongly they were infixed in his memory, by the mention of past incidents, and the recital of puerile kindnesses, dangers and frolics. I soon discovered that he possessed some science of graciousness and attraction which books had not taught, and of which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging those whom he did not benefit; that he diffused, upon his cursory behaviour and most trifling actions, a gloss of softness and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that, by some occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, softened the supercilious, and opened the reserved. I could not but repine at the inelegance of my own manners, which left me no hopes but not to offend, and at the inefficacy of rustic benevolence, which gained no friends but by real service.

My uncle saw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every motion of his hand; and the awkward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embrace of fondness, and his bow of respect. He was like others, easily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my assiduities with compliments and professions. Our fondness was so increased by a mutual endeavour to please each other, that when we returned to London he declared himself unable to leave a nephew so amiable and so

accomplished behind him; and obtained my father's permission to enjoy my company for a few months, by a promise to initiate me in the arts of politeness, and introduce me into public life.

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very slowly, afforded me time for more loose and familiar conversation; but I soon found, that by a few inquiries which he was not well prepared to satisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed assembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topics kept the tongue employed with very little assistance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot where he was necessitated to support a regular tenor of conversation, without any relief from a new comer, or any power of starting into gay digressions, or destroying argument by a jest, he soon discovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinsel of politeness. The first day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I should be astonished at my entrance into London, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wisdom, against the arts by which rusticity is frequently deluded. The same detail and the same advice he would have repeated on the second day; but as I every moment diverted the discourse to the history of the towns by which we passed, or some other subject of learning or of reason, he soon lost his vivacity, grew peevish and silent, wrapped his cloak about him, composed himself to slumber, and reserved his gayety for fitter auditors.

At length I entered London, and my uncle was reinstated in his superiority. He waked at once to loquacity as soon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every street as we crossed it, and owner of every house as we passed by. He presented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances, and splendour of her assemblies; and either in kindness or revenge consulted with her in my presence, how I might be most advantageously dressed for my first appearance, and most expeditiously disencumbered from villatick bashfulness. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous flushed in my face; they mistook anger for shame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of public education, and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

Assurance is indeed the only qualification to which they seem to have annexed merit, and assurance therefore is perpetually recommended to me, as the supply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never sit silent in company when secret history is circulating, but I am reproached for want of assurance. If I fail to return the stated answer to a compliment; if I am disconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I blush when I am discovered gazing on a beauty, or hesitate when I find myself embarrassed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not understand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I suffer a more lively tattler to recount the casualties of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am censured between pity and contempt as a wretch doomed to grovel in obscurity for want of assurance.

I have found many young persons harassed in the same manner, by those to whom age has given nothing but the assurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it useful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whose stupidity has armed him against the shafts of ridicule, will always act and speak with greater audacity than they whose sensibility represses their ardour, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

No. 148.] SATURDAY, AUG. 17, 1751.

Me pater sævis oneret catenis,
Quod viro clemens misero peperci:
Me vel extremos Numidarum in agros
Classe relegat. HOR.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains;
My crime, that I, a loyal wife,
In kind compassion spared my husband's life.
FRANCIS.

POLITICIANS remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized, and the invader repelled, whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated, and wisdom confounded; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without control, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans, that no son could be the murderer of his father; and they had therefore no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child; and therefore they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees, that they had determined too hastily in favour of human nature; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the nearest relation might be violated; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to supply and to change their institutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are indeed many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly, without discovering

that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy, or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting his regard, and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in distress, and flying to him in danger, without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is indeed another method by which the pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributor of happiness, may please himself with exciting terror as the inflicter of pain: he may delight his solitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands; in imagining the desires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it; he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and swell with exultation when he considers how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since as Aristotle observes, *ἡ οἰκονομικὴ μοναρχία, the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is, like other monarchies, too often arbitrarily administrated. The regal and parental tyrants differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotic, has so far shaken off all awe of the public eye, as to venture upon those freaks of injustice which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward not by merit but by fancy, and punishments regulated not by the degree of the offence but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others, no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiscations; and his guilt may whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered; but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestic oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terror and with sorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who surround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy or demands justice, will scarcely be amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to the great law of social beings, by which every individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniences of old age, who alienates from him the assistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in his last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable?

Piety will indeed in good minds overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered, so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than through the tediousness of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindness of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miseries, not to gratitude but to mercy.

No. 149.] TUESDAY, AUG. 20, 1751.

Quod non sit Pylades hoc tempore, non sit Orestes
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turdusve dabatur Oresti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me pinguis Gallia vestit:
Vis tepurpureum, Marce, sagatus amem?
Ut præstem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præstet Orestem,
Hoc non fit verbis; Marce, ut ameris, ama.
MART. VI. 11.

You wonder now that no man sees
Such friends as those of ancient Greece.
Here lay the point:—Orestes' meat
Was just the same his friend did eat
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, Pylades, than thine.
In home-spun russet I am dress'd;
Your cloth is always of the best;
But, honest Marcus, if you please
To choose me for your Pylades,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love—if you would be loved again.—F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

No depravity of the mind has been more frequently or justly censured than ingratitude. There is indeed sufficient reason for looking on those that can return evil for good, and repay kindness and assistance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedness; nor will he, who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deserve to be numbered among social beings; he has endeavoured to destroy confidence, to intercept sympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himself.

There is always danger lest the honest abhorrence of a crime should raise the passions with too much violence against the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous it ought to be ascertained by stronger evidence. The charge against ingratitude is very general; almost every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon insensibility, and how much happiness he has bestowed without return; but perhaps if these patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boast of having befriended, it would often appear that they consulted only their pleasure or vanity, and repaid themselves their petty donatives by gratifications of insolence and indulgence of contempt.

It has happened that much of my time has been passed in a dependent state, and consequently I have received many favours in the opinion of those at whose expense I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and as I would not willingly suppose myself less susceptible of virtuous passions than the rest of mankind, I shall lay the history of my life before you, that you may by your judgment of my conduct, either reform, or confirm, my present sentiments.

My father was the second son of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, whose fortune joined to his own might have supported his posterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a post, which gave him an opportunity of displaying his elegance and politeness. My mother was equally pleased with splendour and equally careless of expense; they both justified their profusion to themselves by endeavouring to believe it necessary to the extension of their acquaintance, and improvement of their interest; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midst of these hopes my father was snatched away by an apoplexy; and my mother who had no pleasure but in dress, equipage, assemblies, and compliments, finding that she could live no longer in her accustomed rank, sunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and discontent.

I was sent with a sister one year younger than myself to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of observing how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourselves on the road with the tenderness and regard with which we should be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young cousins, and for the first month more frequently consoled than upbraided; but in a short time we found our prattle repressed, our dress neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requests referred to the housekeeper.

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new insults. We were soon brought to the necessity of receding from our imagined equality with our cousins, to whom we sunk into humble companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their desires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company, and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us such an appearance of superiority to the awkward bashfulness of our relations, as naturally drew respect and preference from every stranger; and my aunt was forced to assert the dignity of her own children while they were sculking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in silent confusion, by relating the indiscretion of our father, displaying her own kindness, lamenting the misery of birth without estate, and declaring her anxiety for our future provision, and the expedients which she had formed to secure us from those follies, or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occasion. In a short time care was taken to prevent such vexatious mistakes; we were told that fine clothes would only fill our heads with false expectations, and our dress was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

Childhood is not easily dejected or mortified. We felt no lasting pain from insolence or neglect; but, finding that we were favoured and commended by all whose interest did not prompt them to discountenance us, preserved our vivacity and spirit to years of greater sensibility. It then became irksome and disgusting to live without any principle of action but the will of another; and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to ease our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peevishness, and affront.

There are innumerable modes of insult and tokens of contempt, for which it is not easy to find a name, which vanish to nothing in an attempt to describe them, and yet may by continual repetition make day pass after day in sorrow and in terror. Phrases of cursory compliment

and established salutation may, by a different modulation of the voice, or cast of the countenance, convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of respect to expressions of scorn. The dependant who cultivates delicacy in himself, very little consults his own tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment discovering some petulance of accent, or arrogance of mien, some vehemence of interrogation, or quickness of reply, that recalls my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to resent it.

You are not however to imagine that I think myself discharged from the duties of gratitude, only because my relations do not adjust their looks, or tune their voices, to my expectation. The insolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeness or obliquities of insult. I am often told in express terms of the miseries from which charity has snatched me, while multitudes are suffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the parish: and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the same table with my cousins.

That I sit at the first table I must acknowledge, but I sit there only that I may feel the stings of inferiority. My inquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborne, my assertions are controverted, and, as insolence always propagates itself, the servants overlook me, in imitation of their master: if I call modestly I am not heard; if loudly, my usurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and sometimes desired to rise upon very slight pretences.

The incivilities to which I am exposed would give me less pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my sister, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine persecution. As it is said of the supreme magistrate of Venice, that he is a prince in one place and a slave in another, my sister is a servant to her cousin in their apartments, and a companion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw so much regard away from them, that they never suffer her to appear with them in any place where they solicit notice or expect admiration: and when they are visited by neighbouring ladies, and pass their hours in domestic amusements, she is sometimes called to fill a vacancy, insulted with contemptuous freedoms, and dismissed to her needle when her place is supplied. The heir has of late, by the instigation of his sisters, begun to harass with clownish jocularity; he seems inclined to make his first rude essays of his waggery upon her; and by the connivance, if not encouragement, of his father, treats her with such licentious brutality as I cannot bear, though I cannot punish it.

I beg to be informed, Mr. Rambler, how much we can be supposed to owe to beneficence exerted on terms like these? to beneficence which pollutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly said to pander to pride? I would willingly be told whether insolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts servility can, with justice, at the same time expect affection?

I am, Sir, &c.

HYPERDULUS.

No. 150.] SATURDAY, AUG. 24, 1751.

——O munera nondùm
Intellecta Deum!
LUCAN.

——Thou chiefest good!
Bestowed by Heaven, but seldom understood.
ROWE.

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor eseaped by flight; neither awed by greatness, nor eluded by obscurity; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may, perhaps, be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility, and endeavour to conceal by opiates the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit than acquiescence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory or subtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that, where much has been attempted, something has been performed; though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at least sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which philosophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind, abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be unprofitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support, and improve every alleviation. This calmness will be more easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted, not only to pacify us to misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. "He that never was acquainted with adversity," says he, "has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature." He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the passenger to their coasts by promising that he shall return πλείονα εἰδὼς with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new in-

quiries; and, in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety by more rapid flights and bolder excursions: nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracts of earth and heaven, which the expedition would spread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return of the countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted.

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoscere cæli,
Permissum est! pelagus quantos aperimus in usus!
Nunc forsan grave reris opus: sed lata recurret
Cum ratis, et caram cum jam miki reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu nostros tibi tunc audire labores;
Quam referam visas tua per suspiria gentes!

Led by our stars, what tracks immense we trace!
From seas remote, what funds of science raise!
A pain to thought! But when th' heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestic you will then deplore,
And sigh, while I describe the various shore.
EDW. CAVE.

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity to set rocks and hardships at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the same motives have in all ages had the same effect upon those whom the desire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the lower orders of mankind.

If, therefore, it can be proved that distress is necessary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy situation hides from us so large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the sight of affluence and splendour will be much diminished; for, such is the delight of mental superiority, that none on whom nature or study have conferred it, would purchase the gifts of fortune by its loss.

It is certain, that however the rhetoric of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsic ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording some opportunities of observation, which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted, that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception is that of rest after fatigue; yet, that state which labour heightens into delight, is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which therefore the true value cannot be assigned.

"He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive," says the philosopher, "the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour." If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience; he whose courage has made way amidst the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shades of indolence, and whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion or excite resentment is carefully suppressed, and nothing appears but uniformity of sentiments and ardour of affection. It may be observed, that the unvaried complaisance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard, but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

No. 151.] TUESDAY, AUG. 27, 1751.

Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
ἀναρίθμητοι κρέμανται.
τοῦτο δ' ἀμήχανον εὑρεῖν,
Ὅ,τι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τελευ-
τᾷ φέρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν. PINDAR.

But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliss is ever insecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the present shall endure?
WEST

THE writers of medicine and physiology have traced, with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the constitution, and the several stages by which animal life makes its progress from infancy to decrepitude. Though their observations have not enabled them to discover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet surely if they be considered only as the amusements of curiosity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed stars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a task worthy of the moral philoso-

phers to have considered with equal care the climacterics of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every passion begins and ceases to predominate, and noted the regular variations of desire, and the succession of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be stated with equal certainty; our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend so little on our own management, that something more than negligence is necessary to discompose their structure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed in a great measure first to the direction of others, and afterwards of ourselves. It would be difficult to protract the weakness of infancy beyond the usual time; but the mind may be very easily hindered from its share of improvement; and the bulk and strength of manhood must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the understanding of a child.

Yet, amidst all the disorder and inequality which variety of discipline, example, conversation, and employment, produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is still discovered, by a vigilant spectator, such a general and remote similitude, as may be expected in the same common nature affected by external circumstances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the same objects, and have our first pains and pleasures, our first hopes and fears, our first aversions and desires, from the same causes: and though, as we proceed farther, life opens wider prospects to our view, and accidental impulses determine us to different paths; yet as every mind, however vigorous or abstracted, is necessitated, in its present state of union, to receive its informations, and execute its purposes by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itself to our intellectual operations; and those whose abilities or knowledge incline them most to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from eccentricity by the laws of their existence.

If we consider the exercise of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life some particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treasures of knowledge are first opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined seems of equal value, the power of the soul is principally exerted in a vivacious and desultory curiosity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a short time, and flies with equal ardour to another. She delights to catch up loose and unconnected ideas, but starts away from systems and complications, which would obstruct the rapidity of her transitions, and detain her long in the same pursuit.

When a number of distinct images are collected by these erratic and hasty surveys, the fancy is busied in arranging them; and combines them into pleasing pictures with more resemblance to the realities of life, as experience advances, and new observations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed, and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters; but, in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourselves with living nature, we are sooner disgusted with copies in which there appears no resemblance. We first discard absurdity and impossibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at last become cold and insensible to the charms of falsehood, however specious, and, from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affections to truth itself.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reason; we begin to find little pleasure but in comparing arguments, stating propositions, disentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing consequences. The painted vales of imagination are deserted, and our intellectual activity is exercised in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious steps up the narrow tracts of demonstration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or mislead attention, is contemptuously rejected, and every disguise in which error may be concealed, is carefully observed, till, by degrees, a certain number of incontestable or unsuspected propositions are established, and at last concatenated into arguments, or compacted into systems.

At length weariness succeeds to labour, and the mind lies at ease in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any desire of new conquests or excursions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are settled, and the avenues of apprehension shut against any new intelligence; the days that are to follow must pass in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and assertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward so odious as opposition, so insolent as doubt, or so dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the passions usurp the separate command of the successive periods of life. To the happiness of our first years nothing more seems necessary than freedom from restraint; every man may remember that if he was left to himself, and indulged in the disposal of his own time, he was once content without the superaddition of any actual pleasure. The new world is itself a banquet: and, till we have exhausted the freshness of life, we have always about us sufficient gratifications: the sunshine quickens us to play, and the shade invites us to sleep.

But we soon become unsatisfied with negative felicity, and are solicited by our senses and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taste of him who has satisfied his hunger must be excited by artificial stimulations. The simplicity of natural amusement is now past, and art and contrivance must improve our pleasures; but in time, art like nature is exhausted, and the senses can no longer supply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleasure to interest, in which pleasure is perhaps included, though diffused to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear, but the voice of fame; wealth, to which, however variously denominated, every man at some time or other aspires; power, which all wish to obtain within their circle of action; and fame which no man, however high or mean, however wise or ignorant, was yet able to despise. Now prudence and foresight exert their influence; no hour is devoted wholly to any present enjoyment, no act or purpose terminates in itself, but every motion is referred to some distant end; the

accomplishment of one design begins another, and the ultimate wish is always pushed off to its former distance.

At length fame is observed to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whose vigour and alacrity begin to forsake him, by degrees contracts his designs, remits his former multiplicity of pursuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than his power. Avarice is generally the last passion of those lives of which the first part has been squandered in pleasure, and the second devoted to ambition. He that sinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder business of saving it.

I have in this view of life considered men as actuated only by natural desires, and yielding to their own inclinations, without regard to superior principles, by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of passions restrained. Nature will indeed always operate, human desires will be always ranging; but these motions, though very powerful, are not resistless; nature may be regulated, and desires governed; and, to contend with the predominance of successive passions, to be endangered first by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to pass our time, the time of our preparation for that state which shall put an end to experiment, to disappointment, and to change.

No. 152.] Saturday, Aug. 31, 1751.

—Tristia mœstum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum.
HOR.

Disastrous words can best disasters show
In angry phrase the angry passions glow.
ELPHINSTON.

"It was the wisdom," says Seneca, "of ancient times to consider what is most useful as most illustrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolary style, since none is of more various or frequent use, through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened, that among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of public trusts, and during the transaction of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples to the familiar style, or models of private correspondence.

If it be inquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves with so little danger in speaking and writing, may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it must be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due sense of the dignity of the public? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of inability; for surely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet, as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows, must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage, if such of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gayety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observations with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden among the critics. "Letters," says he, "are intended as resemblances of conversation, and the chief excellences of conversation, are good-humour and good-breeding." This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to please must appear pleased, and he who would not provoke rudeness must not practise it. But the question among those who establish rules for an epistolary performance is, how gayety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the critics in history it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or described by any single characteristic; and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarrassments by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission, which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlabour'd diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in

passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments will consequently raise the expression; whatever fills us with hope or terror, will produce some perturbation of images and some figurative distortions of phrase. Wherever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comic scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise without censure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may with all the solemnity of an historian deduce them from their causes, connect them with the concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistic method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetoric to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondent are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the matter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsic dignity, it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude, and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a ribbon, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or business transacted, is to preserve in the minds of the absent either love or esteem: to excite love we must impart pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured, when they are intended to stand for things.

No. 153.] Tuesday, Sept. 3, 1751.

Turba Remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit Damnatos. JUV.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes?
Wealth still finds followers, and misfortune foes.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

There are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I shall therefore forbear the arts by which correspondents generally secure admission: for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corrobrate your own observations.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers, till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of life in study which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year despatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the university I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and, having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable, yet, to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniences of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side; and mechanics have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune; which he had so much harassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us; and, being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom

he found studious and domestic. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by inquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who being without heirs was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was indeed little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action but his present humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity, not only of knowing the history but sharing the wealth of the Mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horse-race.

It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory compliances, or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate by repeated insults to depart from the house, and I was soon, by the same treatment, obliged to follow him.

He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of the health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those blessings which whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

He, indeed, left me no reason to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money; and set apart for my expenses such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expense without profusion. Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gayety, and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that, ranging through all the diversities of life, I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanting to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his increase of strength tempted him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him, without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, opened his closet, where I found a will made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence, and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment public by the tumult of their claims, and the splendour of their sorrow.

It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge entitled to eminence, and, in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches. I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me without any change of posture, or collection of countenance, that their master was at home, and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and, as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to sit down; but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescension.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stock-jobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice, and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who, upon my entrance, advised me, with great solemnity, to think of some settled provision for life. I left him, and hurried away to an old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

Of sixty-seven doors, at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was despatched; at four, was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one, heard the footman rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed, in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies; but I found that

my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit; and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gayety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance; and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I scatter infirmities and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I entreat to sing are troubled with colds: if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the headach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and, whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled, by their superior prudence, to reproach me if I speak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

No. 154 } SATURDAY, SEPT. 7, 1751.

——— *Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis*
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes. VIRG.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raise,
And treat of arts disclosed in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the sacred spring.
DRYDEN.

THE direction of Aristotle to those that study politics, is, first to examine and understand what has been written by the ancients upon government; then to cast their eyes round upon the world, and consider by what causes the prosperity of communities is visibly influenced, and why some are worse and others better administered.

The same method must be pursued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The first task is to search books, the next to contemplate nature. He must first possess himself of the intellectual treasures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increase them by his own collections.

The mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity. The wits of these happy days have discovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors durst never attempt; they cut the knots of sophistry which it was formerly the business of years to untie, solve difficulties by sudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long processes of argument by immediate intuition

Men who have flattered themselves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waste their lives over books as a race of inferior beings, condemned by nature to perpetual pupilage, and fruitlessly endeavouring to remedy their barrenness by incessant cultivation, or succour their feebleness by subsidiary strength. They presume that none would be more industrious than they, if they were not more sensible of deficiencies; and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modesty only to his weakness.

It is however certain that no estimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than those by which a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that by the natural attraction of similitude, we associate with men like ourselves, young, sprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accomplishments by comparison with theirs: when we have once obtained an acknowledged superiority over our acquaintances, imagination and desires easily extend it over the rest of mankind; and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourselves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily listens to the voice of idleness, and soothes the slumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatness. A man, elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and sagacity of conjecture, soon concludes that he already possesses whatever toil and inquiry can confer. He then listens with eagerness to the wild objections which folly has raised against the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigested knowledge; describes the mischievous effects of heterogeneous sciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroic merit of those who deviate from prescription, or shake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and universities.

All these pretensions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which superficial acuteness gains in triumphs over ignorance unsupported by vivacity, are observed by Locke to be lost, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear against her; the sallies of gayety are soon repressed by calm confidence; and the artifices of subtilty are readily detected by those who, having carefully studied the question, are not easily confounded or surprised.

But, though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himself, and was really born with a genius surpassing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet surely such gifts of Providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefully culpable than he whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been transacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no use is made of the labours of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The discoveries of every man must terminate in his own advantage, and the studies of every age be employed on questions which the past generation had discussed and determined. We may with as little

reproach borrow science as manufactures from our ancestors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture which our understandings will not supply.

To the strongest and quickest mind it is far easier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetic and geometry may be comprehended by a close attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himself that the study of a long life would have enabled him to discover them, when he sees them yet unknown to so many nations, whom he cannot suppose less liberally endowed with natural reason than the Grecians or Egyptians.

Every science was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, and the gradual discoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flashes of instruction were struck by the fortuitous collision of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philosopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and transmitting, unclouded, to posterity, that light which had been kindled by causes out of his power. The happiness of these casual illuminations no man can promise to himself, because no endearments can procure them: and, therefore, whatever be our abilities or application, we must submit to learn from others what perhaps would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not some remote inquiry brought it to view; as treasures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exercise of their common occupations.

The man whose genius qualifies him for great undertakings, must at least be content to learn from books the present state of human knowledge; that he may not ascribe to himself the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long registered; and waste, in attempts which have already succeeded or miscarried, that time which might have been spent with usefulness and honour upon new undertakings.

But, though the study of books is necessary, it is not sufficient to constitute literary eminence. He that wishes to be counted among the benefactors of posterity, must add by his own toil to the acquisitions of his ancestors, and secure his memory from neglect by some valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the wastes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undisciplined and barbarous: or by surveying more exactly our ancient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortresses and retreats where she sculks undetected and undisturbed. Every science has its difficulties, which yet call for solution before we attempt new systems of knowledge; as every country has its forests and marshes, which it would be wise to cultivate and drain, before distant colonies are projected as a necessary discharge of the exuberance of the inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whoever hopes for the veneration of mankind must have invention in the design or the execution; either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown must be discovered, or those which are already known enforced by stronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illustrations.

Fame cannot spread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to resist the blast of malignity, and stand firm against the attacks of time, must contain in itself some original principle of growth. The reputation which arises from the detail of transposition of borrowed sentiments may spread for a while like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and suffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

No. 155.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 10, 1751.

——Steriles transmisimus annos
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ.
STAT

——Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last.
ELPHINSTON

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that, as the eye cannot see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined to admit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilities frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them; why those who can distinguish with the utmost nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a position teems thus with commodious consequences, who can without regret confess it to be false? Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind: it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the public eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, nobody is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance but knowledge of

our failures, and to delight us rather as it consolcs our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellence. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign, or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable decision of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which has escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recalls them from their errors, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it: therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expense, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises commonly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the public suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frighted at infamy, and shame prevails when reason was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypocrisy or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners, though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination, and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature, than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness, as that all the peace of solitude, and felicity of meditation, must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit, or betrayed by passion, into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which though settled on conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is indeed such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any men more worthy of veneration and renown than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory, however, has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroic as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that, from experience of the folly of ambition, resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion, may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome by degrees the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory measures or gradual advances, are more tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the enjoyment, that compliance often precedes consideration; and, before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

Indolence is, therefore, one of the vices from which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality.

Facilis descensus Averni:
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis;
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras
Hoc opus, hic labor est. VIRG

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to return, and view the cheerful skies
In this the task, and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conscious: we all know our own state, if we could be induced to consider it; and it might perhaps be useful to the conquest of all these ensnarers of the mind, if, at certain stated days, life was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted, because we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

No. 156.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit. JUV.

For wisdom ever echoes nature's voice.

EVERY government, say the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it must be rescued at certain periods by the resuscitation of its first principles, and the re-establishment of its original constitution. Every animal body, according to the methodic physicians, is, by the predominance of some exuberant quality, continually declining towards disease and death, which must be obviated by a seasonable reduction of the peccant humour to the just equipoise which health requires.

In the same manner the studies of mankind, all at least which, not being subject to rigorous demonstration, admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to error and confusion. Of the great principles of truth which the first speculatists discovered, the simplicity is embarrassed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obscured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they descend from one succession of writers to another, like light transmitted from room to room, they lose their strength and splendour, and fade at last in total evanescence.

The systems of learning therefore must be sometimes reviewed, complications analysed into principles, and knowledge disentangled from opinion. It is not always possible, without a close inspection, to separate the genuine shoots of consequential reasoning, which grow out of some radical postulate, from the branches which art has engrafted on it. The accidental prescriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and those rules are supposed coeval with reason, of which the first rise cannot be discovered.

Criticism has sometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be restrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected; her superintendence of others has betrayed her to negligence of herself; and, like the ancient Scythians, by extending her conquests over distant regions, she has left her throne vacant to her slaves.

Among the laws of which the desire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted the prescription, all which writers have received, had not the same original right to our regard. Some are to be considered as fundamental and indispensable, others only as useful and convenient; some as dictated by reason and necessity, others as enacted by despotic antiquity; some as invincibly supported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or instituted by example, and therefore always liable to dispute and alteration.

That many rules have been advanced without consulting nature or reason, we cannot but suspect, when we find it peremptorily decreed by the ancient masters, that *only three speaking personages should appear at once upon the stage;* a law which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impossible to be observed, we now violate without scruple, and, as experience proves, without inconvenience.

The original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody, or solitary song in honour of Bacchus, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another speaker: but the ancients remembering that the tragedy was at first pronounced only by one, durst not for some time venture beyond two; at last, when custom and impunity had made them daring, they extended their liberty to the admission of three, but restrained themselves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five, I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any necessity arising either from the nature of action or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the representation of such a part of the business of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenor, or without any intermediate pause. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and by consequence of every dramatic action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and indeed the rule is upon the English stage every day broken in effect, without any other mischief than that which arises from an absurd endeavour to observe it in appearance. Whenever the scene is shifted the act ceases, since some time is necessarily supposed to elapse while the personages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the critics confined the dramatic action to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action should approach somewhat nearly to that of exhibition, and those plays will always be thought most happily conducted which crowd the greatest variety into the least space. But since it will frequently happen that some delusion must be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely observed that minds, not prepossessed by mechanical criticism, feel any offence from the extension of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it absurd or impossible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might image with equal ease a greater number.

I know not whether he that professes to regard no other laws than those of nature, will not be

inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto shaded from the fulminations of criticism. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reason can condemn? The connexion of important with trivial incidents, since it is not only common but perpetual in the world, may surely be allowed upon the stage, which pretends only to be the mirror of life. The impropriety of suppressing passions before we have raised them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expection from an event which we keep suspended only to raise it, may be speciously urged. But will not experience show this objection to be rather subtile than just? Is it not certain that the tragic and comic affections have been moved alternately with equal force; and that no plays have oftener filled the eye with tears, and the breast with palpitation, than those which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I do not however think it safe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. The resistless vicissitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and solemnity, may sometimes be more properly ascribed to the vigour of the writer than the justness of the design: and, instead of vindicating tragi-comedy by the success of Shakspeare, we ought, perhaps, to pay new honours to that transcendent and unbounded genius that could preside over the passions in sport; who, to actuate the affections, needed not the slow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with instantaneous jollity to sorrow, and vary our disposition as he changed his scenes. Perhaps the effects even of Shakspeare's poetry might have been yet greater had he not counteracted himself; and we might have been more interested in the distresses of his heroes, had we not been so frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

There are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is necessary that of every play the chief action should be single; for, since a play represents some transaction through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important must evidently constitute two plays.

As the design of tragedy is to instruct by moving the passions, it must always have a hero, a personage, apparently and incontestably superior to the rest, upon whom the attention may be fixed, and the anxiety suspended. For though, of two persons opposing each other with equal abilities and equal virtue, the auditor will inevitably, in time, choose his favourite; yet, as that choice must be without any cogency of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raises will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy against a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, because each claims our concern with the same right, and the heart lies at rest between equal motives.

It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is established because it is right, from that which is right only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

No. 157.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 17, 1751.

Οἱ αἰδὼς
Γίγνεται ἢ ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησι.

Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind.
ELPHINSTON

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH one of your correspondents has presumed to mention with some contempt that presence of attention, and easiness of address, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and esteem, yet I cannot be persuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe that, as we seldom value rightly what we have never known the misery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happiness; and that a natural exuberance of assurance has hindered him from discovering its excellence and use.

This felicity, whether bestowed by constitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can scarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happiness of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of assertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the splendour of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I therefore pursued my studies with incessant industry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to consider either as vicious or tending to vice, because I regarded guilt and reproach as inseparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greatest calamity.

At the university, I found no reason for changing my opinion: for though many among my fellow-students took the opportunity of a more remiss discipline to gratify their passions; yet virtue preserved her natural superiority, and those who ventured to neglect were not suffered to insult her. The ambition of petty accomplishments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was observed to seize commonly on those who either neglected the sciences or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed in the doctrines of my old master, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

This purity of manners, and intenseness of application, soon extended my renown, and I was applauded, by those whose opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themselves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I returned home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticism and philosophy. The wit and the scholar excited curiosity, and my acquaintance was solicited by innumerable invitations. To please will always be the wish of benevolence, to be admired must be the constant aim of ambition; and I therefore considered myself as about to receive the reward of my honest labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

The third day after my arrival I dined at the house of a gentleman who had summoned a mul

titude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding-day. I set forward with great exultation, and thought myself happy that I had an opportunity of displaying my knowledge to so numerous an assembly. I felt no sense of my own insufficiency, till, going up stairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obstreperous merriment. I was, however, disgusted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company rose at my entrance; but when I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility, I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted. My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common civilities with hesitation and impropriety; the sense of my own blunders increased my confusion, and before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to sit down, I was ready to sink under the impression of surprise; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

The assembly then resumed their places, and I sat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the questions of curiosity, or the appeals of complaisance, I could seldom answer but with negative monosyllables, or professions of ignorance; for the subjects on which they conversed were such as are seldom discussed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reason of my conciseness, relieved me by some questions about the present state of natural knowledge, and engaged me, by an appearance of doubt and opposition, in the explication and defence of the Newtonian philosophy.

The consciousness of my own abilities roused me from depression, and long familiarity with my subject enabled me to discourse with ease and volubility; but, however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations to the satisfaction of the company; and my antagonist, who knew the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic, after he had commended my acuteness and comprehension, dismissed the controversy, and resigned me to my former insignificance and perplexity.

After dinner I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myself upon an opportunity to escape from the company, whose gayety began to be tumultuous, and among whom several hints had been dropped of the uselessness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars. To the ladies, therefore, I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, insult and rusticity; but found my heart sink as I approached their apartment, and was again disconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the necessity of encountering so many eyes at once.

When I sat down I considered that something pretty was always said to ladies, and resolved to recover my credit by some elegant observation or graceful compliment. I applied myself to the recollection of all that I had read or heard in praise of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate some classical compliment to the present occasion. I sunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, considered whatever the poets have sung in their praise, and, after having borrowed and invented, chosen and rejected, a thousand sentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been understood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry by the servant who distributed the tea.

There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, though he resolves to give a specimen of his abilities, always finds some reason or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid of my learning, thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of prattle to a man so famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of shame, as I was re-assembling my scattered sentiments, and, resolving to force my imagination to some sprightly sally, had just found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I suffered the saucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lap-dog was scalded, a brocaded petticoat was stained, and the whole assembly was thrown into disorder. I now considered all hopes of reputation as at an end, and while they were consoling and assisting one another, stole away in silence.

The misadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meanest of them that triumphed over me in this state of stupidity and contempt, and feel the same terrors encroaching upon my heart at the sight of those who have once impressed them. Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen me confused, I never appear without new confusion; and the remembrance of the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me from acting or speaking with my natural force.

But is this misery, Mr. Rambler, never to cease? Have I spent my life in study only to become the sport of the ignorant, and debarred myself from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which must sleep in silence, and form opinions which I must not divulge? Inform me, dear Sir, by what means I may rescue my faculties from these shackles of cowardice, how I may rise to a level with my fellow-beings, recall myself from this languor of involuntary subjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reasoning the liberty of speech.

I am, Sir, &c

VERECUNDULUS.

No. 158.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 21, 1751.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est.
HOR.

——Critics yet contend,
And of their vain disputings find no end. FRANCIS

CRITICISM, though dignified from the earliest ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and sagacity, and, since the revival of polite literature, the favourite study of European scho-

lars, has not yet attained the certainty and stability of science. The rules hitherto received are seldom drawn from any settled principle or self-evident postulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable constitution of things; but will be found, upon examination, the arbitrary edicts of legislators, authorised only by themselves, who, out of various means by which the same end may be attained, selected such as happened to occur to their own reflection, and then, by a law which idleness and timidity were too willing to obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, restrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned all future flights of genius to pursue the path of the Meonian eagle.

This authority may be more justly opposed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to control; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteness of critics, who have generally no other merit than that, having read the works of great authors with attention, they have observed the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expression, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented: so that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

For this reason the laws of every species of writing have been settled by the ideas of him who first raised it to reputation, without inquiry whether his performances were not yet susceptible of improvement. The excellences and faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to posterity; and, so far has blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

The imagination of the first authors of lyric poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extensive. Living in an age when science had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors, not being accustomed to accurate inspection, were easily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themselves to instruct, rather by short sentences and striking thoughts, than by regular argumentation; and, finding attention more successfully excited by sudden sallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction, they loosed their genius to its own course, passed from one sentiment to another without expressing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with such lightness and agility, that their footsteps are scarcely to be traced.

From this accidental peculiarity of the ancient writers, the critics deduce the rules of lyric poetry, which they have set free from all the laws by which other compositions are confined, and allow to neglect the niceties of transition, to start into remote digressions, and to wander without restraint from one scene of imagery to another.

A writer of later times has, by the vivacity of his essays, reconciled mankind to the same licentiousness in short dissertations; and he therefore who wants skill to form a plan, or diligence to pursue it, needs only entitle his performance an essay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

In writing, as in life, faults are endured without disgust when they are associated with transcendent merit, and may be sometimes recommended to weak judgments by the lustre which they obtained from their union with excellence; but it is the business of those who presume to superintend the taste or morals of mankind, to separate delusive combinations, and distinguish that which may be praised from that which can only be excused. As vices never promote happiness, though, when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues, they cannot totally destroy it; so confusion and irregularity produce no beauty, though they cannot always obstruct the brightness of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect distant propositions by regular consequences, is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected sentiments flashing upon the mind in quick succession, may, for a time, delight by their novelty; but they differ from systematical reasoning, as single notes from harmony, as glances of lightning from the radiance of the sun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reason, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errors of those who criticise his works; since they may often mislead their pupils by false representations, as the Ciceronians of the sixteenth century were betrayed into barbarisms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is established at present, that the proëmial lines of a poem, in which the general subject is proposed, must be void of glitter and embellishment. "The first lines of Paradise Lost," says Addison, "are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem; in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace."

This observation seems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion, without consideration either of the precept or example. Had Horace been consulted, he would have been found to direct only what should be comprised in the proposition, not how it should be expressed; and to have commended Homer in opposition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual elevation of his diction, but the judicious expansion of his plan; for displaying unpromised events, not for producing unexpected elegances:

——*Speciosa dehinc miracula promit,*
Antiphaten, Scyllamque et cum Cyclope Charybdim

But from a cloud of smoke he breaks to light,
And pours his specious miracles to sight;
Antiphates his hideous feast devours,
Charybdis barks, and Polyphemus roars.—FRANCIS

If the exordial verses of Homer be compared with the rest of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainness or simplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated:

Ἀνδρά μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω·
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμὸν,
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων·
Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο ἱέμενός περ·
Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο·
Νήπιοι, οἱ κατὰ βοῦς ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο
Ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ·
Τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεὰ, θύγατερ Διὸς εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercised in woes, O Muse! resound;
Who when his arms had wrought the destined fall
Of sacred Troy, and razed her heaven-built wall,

Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd
Their manners noted, and their states surveyed:
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore.
Vain toils! their impious folly dared to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day:
The god vindictive doomed them never more
(Ah! men unbless'd) to touch that natal shore.
O snatch some portion of these acts from fate
Celestial Muse! and to our world relate. POPE.

The first verses of the Iliad are in like manner particularly splendid, and the proposition of the Eneid closes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of Virgil.

The intent of the introduction is to raise expectation and suspend it: something therefore must be discovered, and something concealed; and the poet, while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himself by the grace of his language.

He that reveals too much, or promises too little; he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately satiates it, equally defeats his own purpose. It is necessary to the pleasure of the reader, that the events should not be anticipated; and how then can his attention be invited, but by grandeur of expression?

No. 159.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Possis et magnam morbi deponere partem. HOR.

The power of words, and soothing sounds, appease
The raging pain, and lessen the disease. FRANCIS.

THE imbecility with which Verecundulus complains that the presence of a numerous assembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the studious part of mankind, whose education necessarily secludes them in their earlier years from mingled converse, till, at their dismission from schools and academies, they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and coming forth from the gloom of solitude, are overpowered by the blaze of public life.

It is perhaps kindly provided by nature, that, as the feathers and strength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till she is able to fly, so some proportion should be preserved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore restrained by shame, and we remain shackled by timidity till we have learned to speak and act with propriety.

I believe few can review the days of their youth without recollecting temptations which shame rather than virtue enabled them to resist; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles and dangerous in their consequences, they have panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themselves irresistibly depressed by a languid anxiety which seized them at the moment of utterance, and still gathered strength from their endeavours to resist it.

It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability; and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempts, is gradually dissipated as our skill advances towards certainty of success. That bashfulness, therefore, which prevents disgrace, that short and temporary shame which secures us from the danger of lasting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Bashfulness, however it may incommode for a moment, scarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its mischiefs soon pass off without remembrance. It may sometimes exclude pleasure, but seldom opens any avenue to sorrow or remorse. It is observed somewhere, that *few have repented of having foreborne to speak.*

To excite opposition, and inflame malevolence, is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by consciousness of strength. No man finds in himself any inclination to attack or oppose him who confesses his superiority by blushing in his presence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulness receive applause from every voice, and support from every hand. Diffidence may check resolution and obstruct performance, but compensates embarrassments by more important advantages: it conciliates the proud, and softens the severe, averts envy from excellence, and censure from miscarriage.

It may indeed happen that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorific power, as the principles of vegetation are sometimes obstructed by lingering frosts. He that enters late into a public station, though with all the abilities requisite to the discharge of his duty, will find his powers at first impeded by a timidity which he himself knows to be vicious, and must struggle long against dejection and reluctance, before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulness of ease to the dignity of merit.

For this disease of the mind I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To advise a man unaccustomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation, to tell him whose life was passed in the shades of contemplation, that he must not be disconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a splendid assembly, is to advise an inhabitant of Brazil or Sumatra not to shiver at an English winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look upon a precipice without emotion. It is to suppose custom instantaneously controllable by reason, and to endeavour to communicate, by precept, that which only time and habit can bestow.

He that hopes by philosophy and contemplation alone to fortify himself against that awe which all, at their first appearance on the stage of life, must feel from the spectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his resolution; and I doubt whether the preservatives which Plato relates Alcibiades to have received from Socrates, when he was about to speak in public, proved sufficient to secure him from the powerful fascination.

Yet, as the effects of time may by art and industry be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to consider how this troublesome instinct may be opposed when it exceeds its just proportion, and instead of repressing petulance and temerity, silences eloquence, and debilitates force; since, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety should be immediately dissipated, it may be at least somewhat abated; and the passions will operate with less violence when Reason rises against them, than while she either slumbers in neutrality, or, mistaking her interest, lends them her assistance.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an assembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation, and hushed with attention, easily terrifies himself with the dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and show that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers, that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy is suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and, by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency!

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will, perhaps, not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom, perhaps, not one appears to deserve our notice, or excite our sympathy, we should remember, that we likewise are lost in the same throng; that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us; and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear is, to fill a vacant hour with prattle, and be forgotten.

No. 160.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 28, 1751.

——*Inter se convenit ursis.* JUV.

Beasts of each kind their fellows spare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.

"THE world," says Locke, "has people of all sorts." As in the general hurry produced by the superfluities of some, and necessities of others, no man needs to stand still for want of employment, so in the innumerable gradations of ability, and endless varieties of study and inclination, no employment can be vacant for want of a man qualified to discharge it.

Such is probably the natural state of the universe; but it is so much deformed by interest and passion, that the benefit of his adaptation of men to things is not always perceived. The folly or indigence of those who set their services to sale, inclines them to boast of qualifications which they do not possess, and attempt business which they do not understand; and they who have the power of assigning to others the task of life, are seldom honest or seldom happy in their nominations. Patrons are corrupted by avarice, cheated by credulity, or overpowered by resistless solicitation. They are sometimes too strongly influenced by honest prejudices of friendship, or the prevalence of virtuous compassion. For, whatever cool reason may direct, it is not easy for a man of tender and scrupulous goodness to overlook the immediate effect of his own actions, by turning his eyes upon remoter consequences, and to do that which must give present pain, for the sake of obviating evil yet unfelt, or securing advantage in time to come. What is distant is in itself obscure, and when we have no wish to see it, easily escapes our notice, or takes such a form as desire or imagination bestows upon it.

Every man might, for the same reason, in the multitudes that swarm about him, find some kindred mind with which he could unite in confidence and friendship; yet we see many straggling single about the world, unhappy for want of an associate, and pining with the necessity of confining their sentiments to their own bosoms.

This inconvenience arises in like manner, from struggles of the will against the understanding. It is not often difficult to find a suitable companion, if every man would be content with such as he is qualified to please. But if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness and without trust.

There are many natures which can never approach within a certain distance, and which, when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, seem to start back from each other by some invincible repulsion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach of mutual attraction, and with very little formality of preparation mingle intimately as soon as they meet. Every man, whom either business or curiosity has thrown at large into the world, will recollect many instances of fondness and dislike, which have forced themselves upon him without the intervention of his judgment; of dispositions to court some and avoid others, when he could assign no reason for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his passions; of influence that acted instantaneously upon his mind, and which no arguments or persuasions could ever overcome.

Among those with whom time and intercourse have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows some whom he cannot induce himself to trust, though he has no reason to suspect that they would betray him; those to whom he cannot complain, though he never observed them to want compassion; those in whose presence he never can be gay, though excited by invitations to mirth and freedom; and those from whom he cannot be content to receive instruction, though they never insulted his ignorance by contempt or ostentation.

That much regard is to be had to those instincts of kindness and dislike, or that reason should blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate: it is very certain, that by indulgence we may give them strength which they have not by nature; and almost every example of ingratitude and treachery proves, that by obeying them we may commit our happiness to those who are very unworthy of so great a trust. But it may deserve to be remarked, that since few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to solicit the good-will of those whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy; and though officiousness may for a time be admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at last be dismissed with coldness, or discouraged by neglect.

Some have indeed an occult power of stealing

upon the affections, of exciting universal benevolence, and disposing every heart to fondness and friendship. But this is a felicity granted only to the favourite of nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different dispositions; they sometimes obtain unexpected caresses from those whom they never flattered with uncommon regard, and sometimes exhaust all their arts of pleasing without effect. To these it is necessary to look round, and attempt every breast in which they find virtue sufficient for the foundation of friendship; to enter into the crowd, and try whom chance will offer to their notice, till they fix on some temper congenial to their own, as the magnet rolled in the dust collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thousand particles of other substances.

Every man must have remarked the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are, by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almost into different species, which regard one another, for the most part with scorn and malignity. Each of these classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation which he cannot understand. That frolic which shakes one man with laughter, will convulse another with indignation; the strain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raise esteem we must benefit others, to procure love we must please them. Aristotle observes, that old men do not readily form friendships, because they are not easily susceptible of pleasure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal gust the favourite amusement; he whose mind is employed on the same objects, and who therefore never harasses the understanding with unaccustomed ideas, will be welcomed with ardour, and left with regret, unless he destroys those recommendations by faults with which peace and security cannot consist.

It were happy, if in forming friendships, virtue could concur with pleasure; but the greatest part of human gratifications approach so nearly to vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct, can avoid disingenuous compliances; yet certainly he that suffers himself to be driven or allured from virtue, mistakes his own interest, since he gains succour by means for which his friend, if ever he becomes wise, must scorn him, and for which at last he must scorn himself.

No. 161.] TUESDAY, OCT. 1, 1751.

Οἱή γαρ φύλλων γενέη, τοίηδε καὶ ἀνδρων· HOM.

Frail as the leaves that quiver on the sprays,
Like them man flourishes, like them decays.

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have formerly observed that curiosity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to study and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of less importance to any present interest, than the fortune of those who have been long lost in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet, to rouse the zeal of a true antiquary, little more is necessary than to mention a name which mankind have conspired to forget; he will make his way to remote scenes of action through obscurity and contradiction, as Tully sought amidst bushes and brambles the tomb of Archimedes.

It is not easy to discover how it concerns him that gathers the produce, or receives the rent of an estate, to know through what families the land has passed, who is registered in the Conqueror's survey as its possessor, how often it has been forfeited by treason, or how often sold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the present inhabitants of a country cannot be much increased by an inquiry after the names of those barbarians, who destroyed one another twenty centuries ago, in contests for the shelter of woods, or convenience of pasturage. Yet we see that no man can be at rest in the enjoyment of a new purchase, till he has learned the history of his grounds from the ancient inhabitants of the parish, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their ancestors, however bloody, savage, and rapacious.

The same disposition, as different opportunities call it forth, discovers itself in great or little things. I have always thought it unworthy of a wise man to slumber in total inactivity, only because he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is therefore my custom to apply my attention to the objects before me; and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to a man of letters, I have collected the history and antiquities of the several garrets in which I have resided.

Quantulacunque estis, vos ego magna voco

How small to others, but how great to me.

Many of these narratives my industry has been able to extend to a considerable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the house, and can give no account of its ancient revolutions; the plasterer having, at her entrance, obliterated, by his white-wash, all the smoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the ceiling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philosophers, and poets.

When I first cheapened my lodgings, the landlady told me, that she hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the first floor had stipulated that the upper rooms should not be occupied by a noisy trade. I very readily promised to give no disturbance to her family, and soon despatched a bargain on the usual terms.

I had not slept many nights in my new apartment, before I began to inquire after my predecessors, and found my landlady, whose imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

Curiosity, like all other desires, produces pain as well as pleasure. Before she began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and discoveries, of elegance in

disguise, and learning in distress; and was somewhat mortified when I heard that the first tenant was a tailor, of whom nothing was remembered but that he complained of his room for want of light; and, after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was trusted to cut out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

The next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became by frequent treats very much the favourite of the family, but at last received visits so frequently from a cousin in Cheapside, that she brought the reputation of the house into danger, and was therefore dismissed with good advice.

The room then stood empty for a fortnight; my landlady began to think that she had judged hardly, and often wished for such another lodger. At last, an elderly man of a grave aspect read the bill, and bargained for the room at the very first price that was asked. He lived in close retirement, seldom went out till evening, and then returned early, sometimes cheerful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable, that whatever he purchased, he never had small money in his pocket; and, though cool and temperate on other occasions, was always vehement and stormy till he received his change. He paid his rent with great exactness, and seldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a supper. At last, such is the fate of human felicity, the house was alarmed at midnight by the constable, who demanded to search the garrets. My landlady assuring him that he had mistaken the door, conducted him up stairs, where he found the tools of a coiner; but the tenant had crawled along the roof to an empty house, and escaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honest man, and wonders why any body should be hanged for making money when such numbers are in want of it. She however confesses that she shall, for the future, always question the character of those who take her garret without beating down the price.

The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teased for seven weeks by innumerable passengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five stories, and then disliked the prospect, hated the noise of a public street, thought the stairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling, required the walls to be hung with fresher paper, asked questions about the neighbourhood, could not think of living so far from their acquaintance, wished the windows had looked to the south rather than the west, told how the door and chimney might have been better disposed, bid her half the price that she asked, or promised to give her earnest the next day, and came no more.

At last, a short meagre man, in a tarnished waistcoat, desired to see the garret, and, when he had stipulated for two long shelves, and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was completed, he looked round him with great satisfaction, and repeated some words which the woman did not understand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took possession of his room and lived very inoffensively, except that he frequently disturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unseasonable noises. He was generally in bed at noon; but from evening to midnight he sometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, sometimes stamped as in rage, sometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then sat down in deep thought, and again burst out into loud vociferations; sometimes he would sigh as oppressed with misery, and sometimes shake with convulsive laughter. When he encountered any of the family, he gave way or bowed, but rarely spoke, except that as he went up stairs he often repeated,

———'Ος ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει.

This habitant th' aerial regions boast:

hard words, to which his neighbours listened so often that they learned them without understanding them. What was his employment she did not venture to ask him, but at last heard a printer's boy inquire for the author.

My landlady was very often advised to beware of this strange man, who, though he was quiet for the present, might perhaps become outrageous in the hot months; but as she was punctually paid, she could not find any sufficient reason for dismissing him, till one night he convinced her, by setting fire to his curtains, that it was not safe to have an author for her inmate.

She had then for six weeks a succession of tenants who left the house on Saturday, and, instead of paying their rent, stormed at their landlady. At last she took in two sisters, one of whom had spent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering disease, and was now supported and attended by the other: she climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where she languished eight weeks without impatience, or lamentation, except for the expense and fatigue which her sister suffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The sister followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of useless sorrow, and returning to the business of common life, resigned to me the vacant habitation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, are the changes which have happened in the narrow space where my present fortune has fixed my residence. So true it is, that amusement and instruction are always at hand for those who have skill and willingness to find them; and so just is the observation of Juvenal, that a single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 162.] TUESDAY, OCT. 5, 1751.

Orbus es, et locuples, et Bruto consule natus:
Esse tibi veras credis amicitias?
Sunt veræ; sed quas juvenis, quas pauper habebas.
Qui novus est, mortem diligit ille tuam. MART.

What! old, and rich, and childless too,
And yet believe your friends are true?
Truth might perhaps to those belong,
To those who loved you poor and young:
But, trust me, for the new you have
They'll love you dearly—in your grave.

F. LEWIS.

ONE of the complaints uttered by Milton's Samson, in the anguish of blindness, is, that he shall

pass his life under the direction of others; that he cannot regulate his conduct by his own knowledge, but must lie at the mercy of those who undertake to guide him.

There is no state more contrary to the dignity of wisdom than perpetual and unlimited dependance, in which the understanding lies useless, and every motion is received from external impulse. Reason is the great distinction of human nature, the faculty by which we approach to some degree of association with celestial intelligences; but as the excellence of every power appears only in its operations, not to have reason, and to have it useless and unemployed, is nearly the same.

Such is the weakness of man, that the essence of things is seldom so much regarded as external and accidental appendages. A small variation of trifling circumstances, a slight change of form by an artificial dress, or a casual difference of appearance by a new light and situation, will conciliate affection or excite abhorrence, and determine us to pursue or to avoid. Every man considers a necessity of compliance with any will but his own as the lowest state of ignominy and meanness; few are so far lost in cowardice or negligence as not to rouse at the first insult of tyranny, and exert all their force against him who usurps their property, or invades any privilege of speech or action. Yet we see often those who never wanted spirit to repel encroachment or oppose violence, at last by a gradual relaxation of vigilance, delivering up, without capitulation, the fortress which they defended against assault, and laying down unbidden the weapons which they grasped the harder for every attempt to wrest them from their hands. Men eminent for spirit and wisdom often resign themselves to voluntary pupilage, and suffer their lives to be modelled by officious ignorance, and their choice to be regulated by presumptuous stupidity.

This unresisting acquiescence in the determination of others, may be the consequence of application to some study remote from the beaten track of life, some employment which does not allow leisure for sufficient inspection of those petty affairs by which nature has decreed a great part of our duration to be filled. To a mind thus withdrawn from common objects, it is more eligible to repose on the prudence of another, than to be exposed every moment to slight interruptions. The submission which such confidence requires is paid without pain, because it implies no confession of inferiority. The business from which we withdraw our cognizance is not above our abilities, but below our notice. We please our pride with the effects of our influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourselves placed in a higher orb, from which we regulate subordinate agents by a slight and distant superintendence. But whatever vanity or abstraction may suggest, no man can safely do that by others which might be done by himself: he that indulges negligence will quickly become ignorant of his own affairs; and he that trusts without reserve will at last be deceived.

It is, however, impossible but that, as the attention tends strongly towards one thing, it must retire from another: and he that omits the care of domestic business, because he is engrossed by inquiries of more importance to mankind, has, at least, the merit of suffering in a good cause. But there are many who can plead no such extenuation of their folly; who shake off the burden of their station, not that they may soar with less incumbrance to the heights of knowledge or virtue, but that they may loiter at ease and sleep in quiet; and who select for friendship and confidence not the faithful and the virtuous, but the soft, the civil, and compliant.

This openness to flattery is the common disgrace of declining life. When men feel weakness increasing on them, they naturally desire to rest from the struggles of contradiction, the fatigue of reasoning, the anxiety of circumspection; when they are hourly tormented with pains and diseases, they are unable to bear any new disturbance, and consider all opposition as an addition to misery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus desirous of peace, and thus fearful of pain, the old man seldom inquires after any other qualities in those whom he caresses, than quickness in conjecturing his desires, activity in supplying his wants, dexterity in intercepting complaints before they approach near enough to disturb him, flexibility to his present humour, submission to hasty petulance, and attention to wearisome narrations. By these arts alone many have been able to defeat the claims of kindred and of merit, and to enrich themselves with presents and legacies.

Thrasybulus inherited a large fortune, and augmented it by the revenues of several lucrative employments, which he discharged with honour and dexterity. He was at last wise enough to consider that life should not be devoted wholly to accumulation; and, therefore, retiring to his estate, applied himself to the education of his children, and the cultivation of domestic happiness.

He passed several years in this pleasing amusement, and saw his care amply recompensed; his daughters were celebrated for modesty and elegance, and his sons for learning, prudence, and spirit. In time, the eagerness with which the neighbouring gentlemen courted his alliance obliged him to resign his daughters to other families; the vivacity and curiosity of his sons hurried them out of rural privacy into the open world, from whence they had not soon an inclination to return. This, however, he had always hoped; he pleased himself with the success of his schemes, and felt no inconvenience from solitude till an apoplexy deprived him of his wife.

Thrasybulus had now no companion; and the maladies of increasing years having taken from him much of the power of procuring amusement for himself, he thought it necessary to procure some inferior friend who might ease him of his economical solicitudes, and divert him by cheerful conversation. All these qualities he soon recollected in Vafer, a clerk in one of the offices over which he had formerly presided. Vafer was invited to visit his old patron, and being by his station acquainted with the present modes of life, and by constant practice dexterous in business, entertained him with so many novelties, and so readily disentangled his affairs, that he was desired to resign his clerkship, and accept a liberal salary in the house of Thrasybulus.

Vafer, having always lived in a state of de

pendence, was well versed in the arts by which favour is obtained, and could, without repugnance, or hesitation, accommodate himself to every caprice, and echo every opinion. He never doubted but to be convinced, nor attempted opposition but to flatter Thrasybulus with the pleasure of a victory. By this practice he found his way into his patron's heart; and, having first made himself agreeable, soon became important. His insidious diligence, by which the laziness of age was gratified, engrossed the management of affairs; and his petty offices of civility, and occasional intercessions, persuaded the tenants to consider him as their friend and benefactor, and to entreat his enforcement of their representations of hard years, and his countenance, to petitions for abatement of rent.

Thrasybulus had now banqueted on flattery, till he could no longer bear the harshness of remonstrance or the insipidity of truth. All contrariety to his own opinion shocked him like a violation of some natural right, and all recommendation of his affairs to his own inspection was dreaded by him as a summons to torture. His children were alarmed by the sudden riches of Vafer, but their complaints were heard by their father with impatience, as the result of a conspiracy against his quiet, and a design to condemn him, for their own advantage, to groan out his last hours in perplexity and drudgery. The daughters retired with tears in their eyes, but the son continued his importunities till he found his inheritance hazarded by his obstinacy. Vafer triumphed over all their efforts, and continuing to confirm himself in authority, at the death of his master purchased an estate, and bade defiance to inquiry and justice.

No. 163.] TUESDAY, OCT. 8, 1751.

Mitte superba pati fastidia, spemque caducam
Despice; vive tibi, nam moriere tibi SENECA.

Bow to no patron's insolence; rely
On no frail hopes, in freedom live and die.
F. LEWIS.

NONE of the cruelties exercised by wealth and power upon indigence and dependance is more mischievous in its consequences, or more frequently practised with wanton negligence, than the encouragement of expectations which are never to be gratified, and the elation and depression of the heart by needless vicissitudes of hopes and disappointment.

Every man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his desires and enjoyments; any enlargement of wishes is therefore equally destructive to happiness with the diminution of possessions; and he that teaches another to long for what he never shall obtain, is no less an enemy to his quiet, than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

But representations thus refined exhibit no adequate idea of the guilt of pretended friendship; of artifices by which followers are attracted only to decorate the retinue of pomp, and swell the shout of popularity, and to be dismissed with contempt and ignominy, when their leader has succeeded or miscarried, when he is sick of show, and weary of noise. While a man, infatuated with the promises of greatness, wastes his hours and days in attendance and solicitation, the honest opportunities of improving his condition pass by without his notice; he neglects to cultivate his own barren soil, because he expects every moment to be placed in regions of spontaneous fertility, and is seldom roused from his delusion, but by the gripe of distress which he cannot resist, and the sense of evils which cannot be remedied.

The punishment of Tantalus in the infernal regions affords a just image of hungry servility, flattered with the approach of advantage, doomed to lose it before it comes into his reach, always within a few days of felicity, and always sinking back to his former wants;

Καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσεῖδον, χαλεπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα,
Ἑσταότ' ἐν λίμνῃ· ἡ δὲ προσέπλαζε γενείῳ·
Στεῦτο δὲ διψάων, πιέειν δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ἐλέσθαι·
Ὁσσάκι γὰρ κύψει' ὁ γέρων, πιέειν μενεαίνων,
Τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀπολέσκετ' ἀναβροχέων· ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
Γαῖα μέλαινα φάνεσκε, κατεζήνασκε δὲ δαίμων
Δένδρεα δ' ὑψιπέτηλα κατακρῆθεν χέε καρπὸν,
Ὄγχνας, καὶ ροιὰς, καὶ μηλέας ἀγλαόκαρπους,
Συκᾶς τε γλυκερὰς, καὶ ἐλαῖας τηλεθόωσας·
Τῶν ὁπότ' ἰθύσειε ὁ γέρων ἐπὶ χερσὶ μάσασθαι,
Τάσσ' ἄνεμος ῥίπτασκε ποτὺ νέφεα σκιόεντα.

"I saw," says Homer's Ulysses, "the severe punishment of Tantalus. In a lake, whose water approached to his lips, he stood burning with thirst, without the power to drink. Whenever he inclined his head to the stream, some deity commanded it to be dry, and the dark earth appeared at his feet. Around him lofty trees spread their fruits to view: the pear, the pomegranate, and the apple, the green olive, and the luscious fig, quivered before him, which, whenever he extended his hand to seize them, were snatched by the winds into clouds and obscurity."

This image of misery was perhaps originally suggested to some poet by the conduct of his patron, by the daily contemplation of splendour which he never must partake, by fruitless attempts to catch at interdicted happiness, and by the sudden evanescence of his reward, when he thought his labours almost at an end. To groan with poverty, when all about him was opulence, riot, and superfluity, and to find the favours which he had long been encouraged to hope, and had long endeavoured to deserve, squandered at last on nameless ignorance, was to thirst with water flowing before him, and to see the fruits, to which his hunger was hastening, scattered by the wind. Nor can my correspondent, whatever he may have suffered, express with more justness or force the vexations of dependance.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those mortals who have been courted and envied as the favourite of the great. Having often gained the prize of composition at the university, I began to hope that I should obtain the same distinction in every other place, and determined to forsake the profession to which I was destined by my parents, and in which the interest of my family would have procured me a very advantageous settlement. The pride of wit fluttered in my heart; and when I prepared to leave the college, nothing entered my imagination but honours, caresses, and rewards; riches without labour, and luxury without expense.

I however delayed my departure for a time, to finish the performance by which I was to draw the first notice of mankind upon me. When it was completed I hurried to London, and considered every moment that passed before its publication, as lost in a kind of neutral existence, and cut off from the golden hours of happiness and fame. The piece was at last printed and disseminated by a rapid sale; I wandered from one place of concourse to another, feasted from morning to night on the repetition of my own praises, and enjoyed the various conjectures of critics, the mistaken candour of my friends, and the impotent malice of my enemies. Some had read the manuscript, and rectified its inaccuracies; others had seen it in a state so imperfect, that they could not forbear to wonder at its present excellence; some had conversed with the author at the coffee-house; and others gave hints that they had lent him money.

I knew that no performance is so favourably read as that of a writer who suppresses his name, and therefore resolved to remain concealed, till those by whom literary reputation is established had given their suffrages too publicly to retract them. At length my bookseller informed me that Aurantius, the standing patron of merit, had sent inquiries after me, and invited me to his acquaintance.

The time which I had long expected was now arrived. I went to Aurantius with a beating heart, for I looked upon our interview as the critical moment of my destiny. I was received with civilities, which my academic rudeness made me unable to repay; but when I had recovered from my confusion, I prosecuted the conversation with such liveliness and propriety, that I confirmed my new friend in his esteem of my abilities, and was dismissed with the utmost ardour of profession, and raptures of fondness.

I was soon summoned to dine with Aurantius, who had assembled the most judicious of his friends to partake of the entertainment. Again I exerted my powers of sentiment and expression, and again found every eye sparkling with delight, and every tongue silent with attention. I now become familiar at the table of Aurantius, but could never, in his most private or jocund hours, obtain more from him than general declarations of esteem, or endearments of tenderness, which included no particular promise, and therefore conferred no claim. This frigid reserve somewhat disgusted me, and when he complained of three day's absence, I took care to inform him with how much importunity of kindness I had been detained by his rival Pollio.

Aurantius now considered his honour as endangered by the desertion of a wit; and, lest I should have an inclination to wander, told me that I could never find a friend more constant and zealous than himself; that indeed he had made no promises, because he hoped to surprise me with advancement, but had been silently promoting my interest, and should continue his good offices, unless he found the kindness of others more desired.

If you, Mr. Rambler, have ever ventured your philosophy within the attraction of greatness, you know the force of such language introduced with a smile of gracious tenderness, and impressed at the conclusion with an air of solemn sincerity. From that instant I gave myself up wholly to Aurantius; and as he immediately resumed his former gayety, expected every morning a summons to some employment of dignity and profit. One month succeeded another, and, in defiance of appearances, I still fancied myself nearer to my wishes, and continued to dream of success and wake to disappointment. At last the failure of my little fortune compelled me to abate the finery which I hitherto thought necessary to the company with whom I associated, and the rank to which I should be raised. Aurantius, from the moment in which he discovered my poverty, considered me as fully in his power, and afterwards rather permitted my attendance than invited it; thought himself at liberty to refuse my visits, whenever he had other amusements within reach, and often suffered me to wait, without pretending any necessary business. When I was admitted to his table, if any man of rank equal to his own was present, he took occasion to mention my writings, and commend my ingenuity, by which he intended to apologize for the confusion of distinctions, and the improper assortment of his company; and often called upon me to entertain his friends with my productions, as a sportsman delights the squires of his neighbourhood with the curvets of his horse, or the obedience of his spaniels.

To complete my mortification, it was his practice to impose tasks upon me, by requiring me to write upon such subjects as he thought susceptible of ornament and illustration. With these extorted performances he was little satisfied, because he rarely found in them the ideas which his own imagination had suggested, and which he therefore thought more natural than mine.

When the pale of ceremony is broken, rudeness and insult soon enter the breach. He now found that he might safely harass me with vexation, that he had fixed the shackles of patronage upon me, and that I could neither resist him nor escape. At last, in the eighth year of my servitude, when the clamour of creditors was vehement, and my necessity known to be extreme, he offered me a small office, but hinted his expectation that I should marry a young woman with whom he had been acquainted.

I was not so far depressed by my calamities as to comply with this proposal; but, knowing that complaints and expostulations would but gratify his insolence, I turned away with that contempt with which I shall never want spirit to treat the wretch who can outgo the guilt of a robber without the temptation of his profit, and who lures the credulous and thoughtless to maintain the show of his levee, and the mirth of his table, at the expense of honour, happiness, and life.

I am, Sir, &c.

LIBERALIS.

No. 164.] SATURDAY, OCT. 12, 1751.

——Vitium, Gaure, Catonis habes. MART.

Gaurus pretends to Cato's fame;
And proves—by Cato's vice, his claim.

DISTINCTION is so pleasing to the pride of man, that a great part of the pain and pleasure of life

arises from the gratification of disappointment of an incessant wish for superiority, from the success or miscarriage of secret competitions, from victories and defeats, of which, though they appear to us of great importance, in reality none are conscious except ourselves.

Proportionate to the prevalence of this love of praise is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeless his pretensions may appear, to all but himself, has some project by which he hopes to rise to reputation; some art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; some quality, good or bad, which discriminates him from the common herd of mortals, and by which others may be persuaded to love, or compelled to fear him. The ascents of honour, however steep, never appear inaccessible; he that despairs to scale the precipices by which learning and valour have conducted their favourites, discovers some by-path, or easier acclivity, which, though it cannot bring him to the summit, will yet enable him to overlook those with whom he is now contending for eminence; and we seldom require more to the happiness of the present hour, than to surpass him that stands next before us.

As the greater part of human kind speak and act wholly by imitation, most of those who aspire to honour and applause, propose to themselves some example which serves as the model of their conduct and the limit of their hopes. Almost every man, if closely examined, will be found to have enlisted himself under some leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown; to have some hero or other, living or dead, in his view, whose character he endeavours to assume, and whose performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well chosen, and judiciously copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence, which he could never have attained without direction; for few are born with abilities to discover new possibilities of excellence, and to distinguish themselves by means never tried before.

But folly and idleness often contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate: not the qualities which are most illustrious, but those which are of easiest attainment, are selected for imitation; and the honours and rewards which public gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and defects, or adopt some petty singularities, of which those from whom they are borrowed were secretly ashamed.

No man rises to such a height as to become conspicuous, but he is on one side censured by undiscerning malice, which reproaches him for his best actions, and slanders his apparent and incontestable excellences; and idolized on the other by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies into virtues. It may be observed, that he by whose intimacy his acquaintances imagine themselves dignified, generally diffuses among them his mien and his habits; and, indeed, without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not easy, when we converse much with one whose general character excites our veneration, to escape all contagion of his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or disgust, had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally consorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous, but, by injudicious fondness or thoughtless vanity, are adopted with design. There is scarce any failing of mind or body, any error of opinion, or depravity of practice, which, instead of producing shame and discontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praise, and been displayed with ostentatious industry by those who sought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by similitude of deformity.

In consequence of this perverse ambition, every habit which reason condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is upbraided with his faults, he may indeed be pardoned if he endeavours to run for shelter to some celebrated name; but it is not to be suffered that, from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he should issue again with the confidence of conquests, and call upon mankind for praise. Yet we see men that waste their patrimony in luxury, destroy their health with debauchery, and enervate their minds with idleness, because there have been some whom luxury never could sink into contempt, nor idleness hinder from the praise of genius.

This general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the gross, and the force which the recommendation of illustrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be considered by all whose character excludes them from the shades of secrecy, as incitements to scrupulous caution and universal purity of manners. No man, however enslaved to his appetites, or hurried by his passions, can, while he preserves his intellects unimpaired, please himself with promoting the corruption of others. He whose merit has enlarged his influence, would surely wish to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet such will be the effect of his reputation, while he suffers himself to indulge in any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to justify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness, who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shelter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth, since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour.

No. 165.] Tuesday, Oct. 15, 1751.

Ἦν νέος, ἀλλὰ πένης, νῦν γηρῶν, πλούσιός εἰμι.
Ὦ μόνος ἐκ πάντων οἰκτρὸς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις,
Ὃς τότε μὲν χρῆσθαι δυνάμην, ὅτ' οὐκ ἐν ἔσχον.
Νῦν δ' ὅτε χρῆσθαι μὴ δύναμαι, τότ' ἔχω.
ANTIPHILUS.

Young was I once and poor, now rich and old;
A harder case than mine was never told;
Bless'd with the power to use them—I had none;
Loaded with *riches* now—the power is gone.
F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

The writers who have undertaken the unpromising task of moderating desire, exert all the power of their eloquence to show that happiness is not the lot of man, and have, by many arguments and examples, proved the instability of every condition by which envy or ambition are excited. They have set before our eyes all the calamities to which we are exposed from the frailty of nature, the influence of accident, or the stratagems of malice; they have terrified greatness with conspiracies, and riches with anxieties, wit with criticism, and beauty with disease.

All the force of reason, and all the charms of language, are indeed necessary to support positions which every man hears with a wish to confute them. Truth finds an easy entrance into the mind when she is introduced by desire, and attended by pleasure; but when she intrudes uncalled, and brings only fear and sorrow in her train, the passes of the intellect are barred against her by prejudice and passion; if she sometimes forces her way by the batteries of argument, she seldom long keeps possession of her conquests, but is ejected by some favoured enemy, or at best obtains only a nominal sovereignty, without influence and without authority,

That life is short we are all convinced, and yet suffer not that conviction to repress our projects or limit our expectations; that life is miserable we all feel, and yet we believe that the time is near when we shall feel it no longer. But to hope happiness and immortality is equally vain. Our state may indeed be more or less embittered, as our duration may be more or less contracted; yet the utmost felicity which we can ever attain will be little better than alleviation of misery, and we shall always feel more pain from our wants than pleasure from our enjoyments. The incident which I am going to relate will show, that to destroy the effect of all our success, it is not necessary that any signal calamity should fall upon us, that we should be harassed by implacable persecution, or excruciated by irremediable pains; the brightest hours of prosperity have their clouds, and the stream of life, if it is not ruffled by obstructions, will grow putrid by stagnation.

My father resolving not to imitate the folly of his ancestors, who had hitherto left the younger sons encumbrances on the eldest, destined me to a lucrative profession; and I, being careful to lose no opportunity of improvement, was, at the usual time in which young men enter the world, well qualified for the exercise of the business which I had chosen.

My eagerness to distinguish myself in public, and my impatience of the narrow scheme of life to which my indigence confined me, did not suffer me to continue long in the town where I was born. I went away as from a place of confinement, with a resolution to return no more, till I should be able to dazzle with my splendour those who now looked upon me with contempt, to reward those who had paid honours to my dawning merit, and to show all who had suffered me to glide by them unknown and neglected, how much they mistook their interest in omitting to propitiate a genius like mine.

Such were my intentions when I sallied forth into the unknown world, in quest of riches and honours, which I expected to procure in a very short time; for what could withhold them from industry and knowledge? He that indulges hope will always be disappointed. Reputation I very soon obtained; but as merit is much more cheaply acknowledged than rewarded, I did not find myself yet enriched in proportion to my celebrity.

I had, however, in time, surmounted the obstacles by which envy and competition obstruct the first attempts of a new claimant, and saw my opponents and censurers tacitly confessing their despair of success, by courting my friendship and yielding to my influence. They who once pursued me, were now satisfied to escape from me; and they who had before thought me presumptuous in hoping to overtake them, had now their utmost wish, if they were permitted, at no great distance, quietly to follow me.

My wants were not madly multiplied as my acquisitions increased, and the time came, at length, when I thought myself enabled to gratify all reasonable desires, and when, therefore, I resolved to enjoy that plenty and serenity which I had been hitherto labouring to procure, to enjoy them while I was yet neither crushed by age into infirmity, nor so habituated to a particular manner of life as to be unqualified for new studies or entertainments.

I now quitted my profession, and, to set myself at once free from all importunities to resume it, changed my residence, and devoted the remaining part of my time to quiet and amusement. Amidst innumerable projects of pleasure which restless idleness incited me to form, and of which most, when they came to the moment of execution, were rejected for others of no longer continuance, some accident revived in my imagination the pleasing ideas of my native place. It was now in my power to visit those from whom I had been so long absent, in such a manner as was consistent with my former resolution, and I wondered how it could happen that I had so long delayed my own happiness.

Full of the admiration which I should excite, and the homage which I should receive, I dressed my servants in a more ostentatious livery, purchased a magnificent chariot, and resolved to dazzle the inhabitants of the little town with an unexpected blaze of greatness.

While the preparations that vanity required were made for my departure, which, as workmen will not easily be hurried beyond their ordinary rate, I thought very tedious, I solaced my impatience with imaging the various censures that my appearance would produce; the hopes which some would feel from my bounty; the terror which my power would strike on others; the awkward respect with which I should be accosted by timorous officiousness; and the dis-

tant reverence with which others, less familiar to splendour and dignity, would be contented to gaze upon me. I deliberated a long time, whether I should immediately descend to a level with my former acquaintances, or make my condescension more grateful by a gentle transition from haughtiness and reserve. At length I determined to forget some of my companions, till they discovered themselves by some indubitable token, and to receive the congratulations of others upon my good fortune with indifference, to show that I always expected what I had now obtained. The acclamations of the populace I purposed to reward with six hogsheads of ale, and a roasted ox, and then recommend them to return to their work.

At last all the trappings of grandeur were fitted, and I began the journey of triumph, which I could have wished to have ended in the same moment; but my horses felt none of their master's ardour, and I was shaken four days upon rugged roads. I then entered the town; and having graciously let fall the glasses that my person might be seen, passed slowly through the streets. The noise of the wheels brought the inhabitants to their doors, but I could not perceive that I was known by them. At last I alighted, and my name, I suppose, was told by my servants, for the barber stepped from the opposite house, and seized me by the hand with honest joy in his countenance, which, according to the rule that I had prescribed to myself, I repressed with a frigid graciousness. The fellow, instead of sinking into dejection, turned away with contempt, and left me to consider how the second salutation should be received. The next friend was better treated, for I soon found that I must purchase by civility that regard which I had expected to enforce by insolence.

There was yet no smoke of bonfires, no harmony of bells, no shout of crowds, nor riot of joy; the business of the day went forward as before; and, after having ordered a splendid supper, which no man came to partake, and which my chagrin hindered me from tasting, I went to bed, where the vexation of disappointment overpowered the fatigue of my journey and kept me from sleep.

I rose so much humbled by these mortifications, as to inquire after the present state of the town, and found that I had been absent too long to obtain the triumph which had flattered my expectation. Of the friends whose compliments I expected, some had long ago moved to distant provinces, some had lost in the maladies of age all sense of another's prosperity, and some had forgotten our former intimacy amidst care and distresses. Of three whom I had resolved to punish for their former offences by a longer continuance of neglect, one was, by his own industry, raised above my scorn, and two were sheltered from it in the grave. All those whom I loved, feared or hated, all whose envy or whose kindness I had hopes of contemplating with pleasure, were swept away, and their place was filled by a new generation with other views and other competitions; and among many proofs of the impotence of wealth, I found that it conferred upon me very few distinctions in my native place.

I am, Sir, &c.

SEROTINUS.

No. 166.] SATURDAY, OCT. 19, 1751.

Pauper cris semper, si pauper es, Æmiliane:
Dantur opes nullis nunc nisi divitibus. MART.

Once poor, my friend, still poor you must remain;
The rich alone have all the means of gain.—EDW. CAVE

No complaint has been more frequently repeated in all ages than that of the neglect of merit associated with poverty, and the difficulty with which valuable or pleasing qualities force themselves into view, when they are obscured by indigence. It has been long observed that native beauty has little power to charm without the ornaments which fortune bestows, and that to want the favour of others is often sufficient to hinder us from obtaining it.

Every day discovers that mankind are not yet convinced of their error, or that their conviction is without power to influence their conduct; for poverty still continues to produce contempt, and still obstructs the claims of kindred and of virtue. The eye of wealth is elevated towards higher stations, and seldom descends to examine the actions of those who are placed below the level of its notice, and who in distant regions and lower situations are struggling with distress, or toiling for bread. Among the multitudes overwhelmed with insuperable calamity, it is common to find those whom a very little assistance would enable to support themselves with decency, and who yet cannot obtain from near relations, what they see hourly lavished in ostentation, luxury, or frolic.

There are natural reasons why poverty does not easily conciliate affection. He that has been confined from his infancy to the conversation of the lowest classes of mankind, must necessarily want those accomplishments which are the usual means of attracting favour; and though truth, fortitude, and probity, give an indisputable right to reverence and kindness, they will not be distinguished by common eyes, unless they are brightened by elegance of manners, but are cast aside like unpolished gems, of which none but the artist knows the intrinsic value, till their asperities are smoothed, and their incrustations rubbed away.

The grossness of vulgar habits obstructs the efficacy of virtue, as impurity and harshness of style impair the force of reason, and rugged numbers turn off the mind from artifice of disposition, and fertility of invention. Few have strength of reason to overrule the perceptions of sense: and yet fewer have curiosity or benevolence to struggle long against the first impression; he therefore who fails to please in his salutation and address, is at once rejected, and never obtains an opportunity of showing his latent excellences, or essential qualities.

It is, indeed, not easy to prescribe a successful manner of approach to the distressed or necessitous, whose condition subjects every kind of behaviour equally to miscarriage. He whose confidence of merit incites him to meet, without any apparent sense of inferiority, the eyes of those who flattered themselves with their own dignity, is considered as an insolent leveller, impatient of the just prerogatives of rank and wealth, eager to usurp the station to which he has no right, and to confound the subordinations of society; and who would contribute to the exaltation of that

spirit which even want and calamity are not able to restrain from rudeness and rebellion.

But no better success will commonly be found to attend servility and dejection, which often give pride the confidence to treat them with contempt. A request made with diffidence and timidity is easily denied, because the petitioner himself seems to doubt its fitness.

Kindness is generally reciprocal; we are desirous of pleasing others, because we receive pleasure from them; but by what means can the man please, whose attention is engrossed by his distresses, and who has no leisure to be officious; whose will is restrained by his necessities, and who has no power to confer benefits; whose temper is perhaps vitiated by misery, and whose understanding is impeded by ignorance?

It is yet a more offensive discouragement, that the same actions performed by different hands produce different effects, and, instead of rating the man by his performances, we rate too frequently the performance by the man. It sometimes happens in the combinations of life, that important services are performed by inferiors; but though their zeal and activity may be paid by pecuniary rewards, they seldom excite that flow of gratitude, or obtain that accumulation of recompense with which all think it their duty to acknowledge the favour of those who descend to their assistance from a higher elevation. To be obliged, is to be in some respect inferior to another; and few willingly indulge the memory of an action which raises one whom they have always been accustomed to think below them, but satisfy themselves with faint praise and penurious payment, and then drive it from their own minds, and endeavour to conceal it from the knowledge of others.

It may be always objected to the services of those who can be supposed to want a reward, that they were produced not by kindness, but interest; they are therefore, when they are no longer wanted, easily disregarded as arts of insinuation, or stratagems of selfishness. Benefits which are received as gifts from wealth, are exacted as debts from indigence; and he that in a high station is celebrated for superfluous goodness, would in a meaner condition have barely been confessed to have done his duty.

It is scarcely possible for the utmost benevolence to oblige, when exerted under the disadvantages of great inferiority: for, by the habitual arrogance of wealth, such expectations are commonly formed as no zeal or industry can satisfy; and what regard can he hope, who has done less than was demanded from him?

There are indeed kindnesses conferred which were never purchased by precedent favours, and there is an affection not arising from gratitude or gross interest, by which similar natures are attracted to each other, without prospect of any other advantage than the pleasure of exchanging sentiments, and the hope of confirming their esteem of themselves by the approbation of each other. But this spontaneous fondness seldom rises at the sight of poverty, which every one regards with habitual contempt, and of which the applause is no more courted by vanity, than the countenance is solicited by ambition. The most generous and disinterested friendship must be resolved at last into the love of ourselves; he therefore whose reputation or dignity inclines us to consider his esteem as a testimonial of desert, will always find our hearts open to his endearments. We every day see men of eminence followed with all the obsequiousness of dependance, and courted with all the blandishments of flattery, by those who want nothing from them but professions of regard, and who think themselves liberally rewarded by a bow, a smile, or an embrace.

But those prejudices which every mind feels more or less in favour of riches, ought, like other opinions, which only custom and example have impressed upon us, to be in time subjected to reason. We must learn how to separate the real character from extraneous adhesion and casual circumstances, to consider closely him whom we are about to adopt or to reject; to regard his inclinations as well as his actions; to trace out those virtues which lie torpid in the heart for want of opportunity, and those vices that lurk unseen by the absence of temptation: that when we find worth faintly shooting in the shades of obscurity, we may let in light and sunshine upon it, and ripen barren volition into efficacy and power.

No. 167.] Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1751.

Candida perpetuo reside, Concordia, lecto,
Tamque pari semper sit Venus æqua jugo.
Diligat ipsa senem quondam: sed et illa marito,
Tunc quoque cum fuerit, non videatur anus.

MART.

Their nuptial bed may smiling Concord dress,
And Venus still the happy union bless!
Wrinkled with age, may mutual love and truth
To their dim eyes recall the bloom of youth.

F. LEWIS

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

It is not common to envy those with whom we cannot easily be placed in comparison, Every man sees without malevolence the progress of another in the tracts of life, which he has himself no desire to tread, and hears, without inclination to cavils or contradiction, the renown of those whose distance will not suffer them to draw the attention of mankind from his own merit. The sailor never thinks it necessary to contest the lawyer's abilities; nor would the Rambler, however jealous of his reputation, be much disturbed by the success of rival wits at Agra or Ispahan.

We do not therefore ascribe to you any superlative degree of virtue, when we believe that we may inform you of our change of condition without danger of malignant fascination; and that when you read of the marriage of your correspondents Hymenæus and Tranquilla, you will join your wishes to those of their other friends for the happy event of a union in which caprice and selfishness had so little part.

There is at least this reason why we should be less deceived in our connubial hopes than many who enter into the same state, that we have allowed our minds to form no unreasonable expectations, nor vitiated our fancies, in the soft hours of courtship, with visions of felicity which human power cannot bestow, or of perfection which human virtue cannot attain. That impartiality

with which we endeavour to inspect the manners of all whom we have known was never so much overpowered by our passion, but that we discovered some faults and weaknesses in each other; and joined our hands in conviction, that as there are advantages to be enjoyed in marriage, there are inconveniences likewise to be endured; and that, together with confederate intellects and auxiliar virtues, we must find different opinions and opposite inclinations.

We however flatter ourselves, for who is not flattered by himself as well as by others on the day of marriage? that we are eminently qualified to give mutual pleasure. Our birth is without any such remarkable disparity as can give either an opportunity of insulting the other with pompous names and splendid alliances, or of calling in, upon any domestic controversy, the overbearing assistance of powerful relations. Our fortune was equally suitable, so that we meet without any of those obligations which always produce reproach or suspicion of reproach, which, though they may be forgotten in the gayeties of the first month, no delicacy will always suppress, or of which the suppression must be considered as a new favour, to be repaid by tameness and submission, till gratitude takes the place of love, and the desire of pleasing degenerates by degrees into the fear of offending.

The settlements caused no delay: for we did not trust our affairs to the negotiation of wretches who would have paid their court by multiplying stipulations. Tranquilla scorned to detain any part of her fortune from him into whose hands she delivered up her person; and Hymenæus thought no act of baseness more criminal than his who enslaves his wife by her own generosity, who, by marrying without a jointure, condemns her to all the dangers of accident and caprice, and at last boasts his liberality, by granting what only the indiscretion of her kindness enabled him to withhold. He therefore received on the common terms, the portion which any other woman might have brought him, and reserved all the exuberance of acknowledgment for those excellences which he has yet been able to discover only in Tranquilla.

We did not pass the weeks of courtship like those who consider themselves as taking the last draught of pleasure, and resolve not to quit the bowl without a surfeit, or who know themselves about to set happiness to hazard, and endeavour to lose their sense of danger in the ebriety of perpetual amusement, and whirl round the gulf before they sink. Hymenæus often repeated a medical axiom, that *the succours of sickness ought not to be wasted in health*. We know that however our eyes may yet sparkle, and our hearts bound at the presence of each other, the time of listlessness and satiety, of peevishness and discontent, must come at last, in which we shall be driven for relief to shows and recreations; that the uniformity of life must be sometimes diversified, and the vacuities of conversation sometimes supplied. We rejoice in the reflection that we have stores of novelty yet unexhausted, which may be opened when repletion shall call for change, and gratifications yet untasted, by which life, when it shall become vapid or bitter, may be restored to its former sweetness and sprightliness, and again irritate the appetite, and again sparkle in the cup.

Our time will probably be less tasteless than that of those whom the authority and avarice of parents unite almost without their consent in their early years, before they have accumulated any fund of reflection, or collected materials for mutual entertainment. Such we have often seen rising in the morning to cards, and retiring in the afternoon to doze, whose happiness was celebrated by their neighbours, because they happened to grow rich by parsimony, and to be kept quiet by insensibility, and agreed to eat and to sleep together.

We have both mingled with the world, and are therefore no strangers to the faults and virtues, the designs and competitions, the hopes and fears of our contemporaries. We have both amused our leisure with books, and can therefore recount the events of former times, or cite the dictates of ancient wisdom. Every occurrence furnishes us with some hint which one or the other can improve, and if it should happen that memory or imagination fail us, we can retire to no idle or unimproving solitude.

Though our characters, beheld at a distance, exhibit this general resemblance, yet a nearer inspection discovers such a dissimilitude of our habitudes and sentiments, as leaves each some peculiar advantages and affords that *concordia discors*, that suitable disagreement which is always necessary to intellectual harmony. There may be a total diversity of ideas which admits no participation of the same delight, and there may likewise be such a conformity of notions as leaves neither any thing to add to the decisions of the other. With such contrariety there can be no peace, with such similarity there can be no pleasure. Our reasonings, though often formed upon different views, terminate generally in the same conclusion. Our thoughts, like rivulets issuing from distant springs, are each impregnated in its course with various mixtures, and tinged by infusions unknown to the other, yet, at last, easily unite into one stream, and purify themselves by the gentle effervescence of contrary qualities.

These benefits we receive in a greater degree as we converse without reserve, because we have nothing to conceal. We have no debts to be paid by imperceptible deductions from avowed expenses, no habits to be indulged by the private subserviency of a favoured servant, no private interviews with needy relations, no intelligence with spies placed upon each other. We considered marriage as the most solemn league of perpetual friendship, a state from which artifice and concealment are to be banished for ever, and in which every act of dissimulation is a breach of faith.

The impetuous vivacity of youth, and that ardour of desire, which the first sight of pleasure naturally produces, have long ceased to hurry us into irregularity and vehemence; and experience has shown us that few gratifications are too valuable to be sacrificed to complaisance. We have thought it convenient to rest from the fatigue of pleasure, and now only continue that course of life into which we had before entered, confirmed in our choice by mutual approbation, supported in our resolution by mutual encouragement, and assisted in our efforts by mutual exhortation. Such, Mr. Rambler, is our prospect of life, a prospect which, as it is beheld

with more attention, seems to open more extensive happiness, and spreads, by degrees, into the boundless regions of eternity. But if all our prudence has been vain, and we are doomed to give one instance more of the uncertainty of human discernment, we shall comfort ourselves amidst our disappointments, that we were not betrayed by such delusions as caution could not escape, since we sought happiness only in the arms of virtue. We are, Sir,

Your humble servants,

HYMENÆUS,
TRANQUILLA.

No. 168.] SATURDAY, OCT. 26, 1751.

——*Decipit*
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo. PHÆDRUS.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien,
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

IT has been observed by Boileau, that "a mean or common thought, expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled to judge of words, than whom study has qualified to examine things."

This solution might satisfy, if such only were offended with meanness of expression as are unable to distinguish propriety of thought, and to separate propositions or images from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the understanding. But this kind of disgust is by no means confined to the ignorant or superficial; it operates uniformly and universally upon readers of all classes; every man, however profound or abstracted, perceives himself irresistibly alienated by low terms; they who profess the most zealous adherence to truth are forced to admit that she owes part of her charms to her ornaments; and loses much of her power over the soul when she appears disgraced by a dress uncouth or ill-adjusted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not disgusted alike by the same compositions, because we do not all agree to censure the same terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another; our opinion therefore of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciously established, depends wholly upon accident and custom. The cottager thinks those apartments splendid and spacious, which an inhabitant of palaces will despise for their inelegance; and to him who has passed most of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expressions will seem sordid, which another, equally acute, may hear without offence; but a mean term never fails to displease him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably despised, though he who is poor in the eyes of some, may, by others, be envied for his wealth.

Words become low by the occasions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who use them; and the disgust which they produce arises from the revival of those images with which they are commonly united. Thus, if, in the most solemn discourse, a phrase happens to occur which has been successfully employed in some ludicrous narrative, the gravest auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepossessed by the same accidental association, are utterly unable to guess the reason of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths, and can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleasing images.

When Macbeth is confirming himself in the horrid purpose of stabbing his king, he breaks out amidst his emotions into a wish natural for a murderer:

——Come, thick night!
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;
Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, Hold, hold!

In this passage is exerted all the force of poetry; that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies sentiment, and animates matter; yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of his attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested, not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the Iliad tells us that δόρυ μαίνεται, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terror of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, who dreaded, says Lucan, lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker:

Si robora sacra ferirent,
In sua credebant redituras membra secures,

None dares with impious steel the grove to rend
Lest on himself the destined stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathise with the horrors of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employments; we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife*; or who does not, at last, from the long habit of connecting a knife with sordid offices, feel aversion rather than terror?

Macbeth proceeds to wish, in the madness of guilt, that the inspection of Heaven may be intercepted, and that he may in the involutions of infernal darkness, escape the eye of Providence. This is the utmost extravagance of determined wickedness: yet this is so debased by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impress on my reader the energy of the sentiment, I can scarcely check my risibility, when the expression forces itself upon my mind; for who, without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a blanket?*

These imperfections of diction are less obvious to the reader, as he is less acquainted with common usages; they are therefore wholly imperceptible

to a forcigner, who learns our language from books, and will strikc a solitary academic less forcibly than a modish lady.

Among the numerous requisites that most concur to complete an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The seeds of knowledge may be planted in solitude, but must bc cultivated in public. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement; but the artifice of embellishment, and the powers of attraction, can be gained only by general converse.

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary likewise for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires, for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellences, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms; and he that will not condescend to recommend himself by external embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiments meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

No 169.] Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1751.

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues.
PERSIUS.

No blood from bitten nails those poems drew;
But churn'd, like spittle from the lips they flew.
DRYDEN.

Natural historians assert that whatever is formed for long duration arrives slowly to its maturity. Thus the firmest timber is of tardy growth, and animals generally exceed each other in longevity, in proportion to the time between their conception and their birth.

The same observation may be extended to the offspring of the mind. Hasty compositions, however they please at first by flowery luxuriance, and spread in the sunshine of temporary favour, can seldom endure the change of seasons, but perish at the first blast of criticism, or frost of neglect. When Apelles was reproached with the paucity of his productions, and the incessant attention with which he retouched his pieces, he condescended to make no other answer than that *he painted for perpetuity.*

No vanity can more justly incur contempt and indignation than that which boasts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear with patience the writer who claims such superiority to the rest of his species, as to imagine that mankind are at leisure for attention to his extemporary sallies, and that posterity will repose his casual effusions among the treasures of ancient wisdom?

Men have sometimes appeared of such transcendant abilities, that their slightest and most cursory performances excel all that labour and study can enable meaner intellects to compose; as there are regions of which the spontaneous products cannot be equalled in other soils by care and culture. But it is no less dangerous for any man to place himself in this rank of understanding, and fancy that he is born to be illustrious without labour, than to omit the cares of husbandry, and expect from his ground the blossoms of Arabia.

The greatest part of those who congratulate themselves upon their intellectual dignity, and usurp the privileges of genius are men whom only themselves would ever have marked out as enriched by uncommon liberalities of nature, or entitled to veneration and immortality on easy terms. This ardour of confidence is usually found among those who, having not enlarged their notions by books or conversation, are persuaded by the partiality which we all feel in our own favour, that they have reached the summit of excellence, because they discover none higher than themselves; and who acquiesce in the first thoughts that occur, because their scantiness of knowledge allows them little choice; and the narrowness of their views affords them no glimpse of perfection, of that sublime idea which human industry has from the first ages been vainly toiling to approach. They see a little, and believe that there is nothing beyond their sphere of vision, as the Patuecos of Spain, who inhabited a small valley, conceived the surrounding mountains to be the boundaries of the world. In proportion as perfection is more distinctly conceived, the pleasure of contemplating our own performances will be lessened; it may therefore be observed, that they who most deserve praise are often afraid to decide in favour of their own performances; they know how much is still wanting to their completion, and wait with anxiety and terror the determination of the public. "I please every one else," says Tully, "but never satisfy myself."

It has often been inquired, why, notwithstanding the advances of latter ages in science, and the assistance which the infusion of so many new ideas has given us, we still fall below the ancients in the art of composition. Some part of their superiority may be justly ascribed to the graces of their language, from which the most polished of the present European tongues are nothing more than barbarous degenerations. Some advantage they might gain merely by priority, which put them in possession of the most natural sentiments, and left us nothing but servile repetition or forced conceits. But the greater part of their praise seems to have been the just reward of modesty and labour. Their sense of human weakness confined them commonly to one study, which their knowledge of the extent of every science engaged them to prosecute with indefatigable diligence.

Among the writers of antiquity I remember none except Statius who ventures to mention the speedy production of his writings either as an extenuation of his faults, or a proof of his facility. Nor did Statius, when he considered himself as a candidate for lasting reputation, think a closer attention unnecessary, but amidst all his pride and indigence, the two great hasteners of modern

poems, employed twelve years upon the Thebaid, and thinks his claim to renown proportionate to his labour.

Thebais, multa cruciata lima,
Tentat, audaci fide, Mantuanæ
Gaudia famæ.

Polished with endless toil, my lays
At length aspire to Mantuan praise.

Ovid indeed apologizes in his banishment for the imperfection of his letters, but mentions his want of leisure to polish them, as an addition to his calamities; and was so far from imagining revisals and corrections unnecessary, that at his departure from Rome he threw his Metamorphoses into the fire, lest he should be disgraced by a book which he could not hope to finish.

It seems not often to have happened that the same writer aspired to reputation in verse and prose; and of those few that attempted such diversity of excellence, I know not that even one succeeded. Contrary characters they never imagined a single mind able to support, and therefore no man is recorded to have undertaken more than one kind of dramatic poetry.

What they had written, they did not venture in their first fondness to thrust into the world, but, considering the impropriety of sending forth inconsiderately that which cannot be recalled, deferred the publication, if not nine years, according to the direction of Horace, yet till their fancy was cooled after the raptures of invention and the glare of novelty had ceased to dazzle the judgment.

There were in those days no weekly or diurnal writers; *multa dies, et multa litura*, much time, and many rasures, were considered as indispensable requisites; and that no other method of attaining lasting praise has been yet discovered, may be conjectured from the blotted manuscripts of Milton now remaining, and from the tardy emission of Pope's compositions, delayed more than once till the incidents to which they alluded were forgotten, till his enemies were secure from his satire, and, what to an honest mind must be more painful, his friends were deaf to his encomiums.

To him, whose eagerness of praise hurries his productions soon into the light, many imperfections are unavoidable, even where the mind furnishes the materials, as well as regulates their disposition, and nothing depends upon search or information. Delay opens new veins of thought, the subject dismissed for a time appears with a new train of dependent images, the accidents of reading or conversation supply new ornaments or allusions, or mere intermission of the fatigue of thinking enables the mind to collect new force, and make new excursions. But all those benefits come too late for him, who, when he was weary with labour, snatched at the recompense, and gave his work to his friends and his enemies as soon as impatience and pride persuaded him to conclude it.

One of the most pernicious effects of haste is obscurity. He that teems with a quick succession of ideas, and perceives how one sentiment produces another, easily believes that he can clearly express what he so strongly comprehends; he seldom suspects his thoughts of embarrassment, while he preserves in his own memory the series of connexion, or his diction of ambiguity, while only one sense is present to his mind. Yet if he has been employed on an abstruse or complicated argument, he will find, when he has a while withdrawn his mind, and returns as a new reader to his work, that he has only a conjectural glimpse of his own meaning, and that to explain it to those whom he desires to instruct, he must open his sentiments, disentangle his method, and alter his arrangement.

Authors and lovers always suffer some infatuation, from which only absence can set them free; and every man ought to restore himself to the full exercise of his judgment, before he does that which he cannot do improperly, without injuring his honour and his quiet.

No. 170.] SATURDAY, Nov. 2, 1751.

Confiteor: si quid prodest delicta fateri. OVID

I grant the charge: forgive the fault confess'd.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those beings from whom many, that melt at the sight of all other misery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to suffer without complaint, and perish without regard; and whom I myself have formerly insulted in the pride of reputation and security of innocence.

I am of a good family, but my father was burdened with more children than he could decently support. A wealthy relation, as he travelled from London to his country-seat, condescending to make him a visit, was touched with compassion of his narrow fortune, and resolved to ease him of part of his charge, by taking the care of a child upon himself. Distress on one side, and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondness, and the little family passed in review before him, that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and, without knowing for what purpose, I was called to my great cousin, endeavoured to recommend myself by my best courtesy, sung him my prettiest song, told the last story that I had read, and so much endeared myself by my innocence, that he declared his resolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

My parents felt the common struggles at the thought of parting, and *some natural tears they dropp'd, but wiped them soon*. They considered, not without that false estimation of the value of wealth which poverty long continued always produces, that I was raised to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeath. My mother sold some of her ornaments to dress me in such a manner as might secure me from contempt at my first arrival; and, when she dismissed me, pressed me to her bosom with an embrace that I still feel, gave me some precepts of piety, which, however neglected, I have not forgotten, and uttered prayers for my final happiness, of which I have not yet ceased to hope that they will at last be granted.

My sisters envied my new finery, and seemed not much to regret our separation; my father conducted me to the stage-coach with a kind of cheerful tenderness; and in a very short time I was transported to splendid apartments, and a

luxurious table, and grew familiar to show, noise, and gayety.

In three years my mother died, having implored a blessing on her family with her last breath. I had little opportunity to indulge a sorrow which there was none to partake with me, and therefore soon ceased to reflect much upon my loss. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom some fortunate adventures and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died four years after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

I should have shared the increase of his fortune, and had once a fortune assigned me in his will; but my cousin assuring him that all care for me was needless, since he had resolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongst my sisters.

Thus I was thrown upon dependance without resource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated into company, I was no longer to be supported in my former character but at considerable expense; so that partly lest I should waste money, and partly lest my appearance might draw too many compliments and assiduities, I was insensibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head servant but that of receiving no wages.

I felt every indignity, but knew that resentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little services and active officiousness, and, for a time, preserved myself from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and studying to please rather than to shine. But my interest, notwithstanding this expedient, hourly declined, and my cousin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and consult me about alterations of a cast gown.

I was now completely depressed; and though I had seen mankind enough to know the necessity of outward cheerfulness, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might escape from perpetual mortification. At last my schemes and sorrows were interrupted by a sudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occasion, when we were left together in a room, to bid me suffer myself no longer to be insulted, but assume the place which he always intended me to hold in the family. He assured me that his wife's preference of her own daughters should never hurt me; and, accompanying his professions with a purse of gold, ordered me to bespeak a rich suit at the mercer's, and to apply privately to him for money when I wanted it, and insinuate that my other friends supplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

By this stratagem, which I did not then understand, he filled me with tenderness and gratitude, compelled me to repose on him as my only support, and produced a necessity of private conversation. He often appointed interviews at the house of an acquaintance, and sometimes called on me with a coach, and carried me abroad. My sense of his favour, and the desire of retaining it, disposed me to unlimited complaisance, and, though I saw his kindness grow every day more fond, I did not suffer any suspicion to enter my thoughts. At last the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the submission which he exacted as my benefactor, to complete the ruin of an orphan, whom his own promises had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority subdued.

I know not why it should afford subject of exultation, to overpower on any terms the resolution, or surprise the caution of a girl; but of all the boasters that deck themselves in the spoils of innocence and beauty, they surely have the least pretensions to triumph, who submit to owe their success to some casual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of understanding, in their attempts; they cannot please their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their address, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themselves as possessed of any qualities by which affection is attracted. They surmount no obstacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only those who cannot resist, and are often content to possess the body, without any solicitude to gain the heart.

Many of these despicable wretches does my present acquaintance with infamy and wickedness enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery; reptiles whom their own servants would have despised, had they not been their servants, and with whom beggary would have disdained intercourse, had she not been allured by hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns, or shivering in the streets, have been corrupted, not by arts of gallantry which stole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence asleep, but by the fear of losing benefits which were never intended, or of incurring resentment which they could not escape; some have been frighted by masters, and some awed by guardians into ruin.

Our crime had its usual consequence, and he soon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was distracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all discovery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety which perhaps none but himself saw in my countenance; but at last mingled his assurances of protection and maintenence with menaces of total desertion, if, in the moments of perturbation, I should suffer his secret to escape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

Thus passed the dismal hours, till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had sent for me to a distant country, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

I am, Sir, &c.

MISELLA.

No. 171.] TUESDAY, Nov. 5, 1751.

——*Tædet cæli conveza tueri.* VIRG.

Dark is the sun, and loathsome is the day

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

MISELLA now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more powerfully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just description of the condition into which the wan

ton plunges herself, and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

After the distraction, hesitation, and delays which the timidity of guilt naturally produces, I was removed to lodgings in a distant part of the town, under one of the characters commonly assumed upon such occasions. Here being by my circumstances condemned to solitude, I passed most of my hours in bitterness and anguish. The conversation of the people with whom I was placed was not at all capable of engaging my attention, or dispossessing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were such as heightened my abhorrence of myself; for I was not so far abandoned as to sink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

My relation remitted none of his fondness, but visited me so often, that I was sometimes afraid lest his assiduity should expose him to suspicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was therefore less delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expostulations upon the unreasonableness of my sorrow, and innumerable protestations of everlasting regard, he at last found that I was more affected with the loss of my innocence than the danger of my fame, and, that he might not be disturbed by my remorse, began to lull my conscience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were such as my course of life has since exposed me often to the necessity of hearing, vulgar, empty, and fallacious; yet they at first confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the sincerity of my repentance, without substituting any other support. I listened awhile to his impious gabble; but its influence was soon overpowered by natural reason and early education, and the convictions which this new attempt gave me of his baseness completed my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempests drive ships upon their coast, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading —and have always thought that wretches, thus merciless in their depredations, ought to be destroyed by a general insurrection of all social beings; yet, how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who, in the agitations of remorse, cuts away the anchor of piety, and, when he has drawn aside credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of heaven which would direct her to return! I had hitherto considered him as a man equally betrayed with myself by the concurrence of appetite and opportunity; but I now saw with horror that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was desirous to fit me to his purpose, by complete and radical corruption.

To escape, however, was not yet in my power. I could support the expenses of my condition, only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was necessary, and in a few weeks congratulated me upon my escape from the danger which we had both expected with so much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promise to restore me with my fame uninjured to the world. He promised me in general terms, that nothing should be wanting which his power could add to my happiness, but forebore to release me from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my speedy return, and was therefore outrageously impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdness. He told me at last, with an appearance of sorrow, that all hopes of restoration to my former state were for ever precluded; that chance had discovered my secret, and malice divulged it; and that nothing now remained, but to seek a retreat more private, where curiosity or hatred could never find us.

The rage, anguish, and resentment, which I felt at this account are not to be expressed. I was in so much dread of reproach and infamy, which he represented as pursuing me with full cry, that I yielded myself implicitly to his disposal, and was removed, with a thousand studied precautions, through by-ways and dark passages to another house, where I harassed him with perpetual solicitations for a small annuity that might enable me to live in the country in obscurity and innocence.

This demand he at first evaded with ardent professions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and distrust; and having one day endeavoured to soothe me with uncommon expressions of tenderness, when he found my discontent immoveable, left me with some inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleased that he was at last roused to sensibility, and expecting that at his next visit he would comply with my request, lived with great tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was so much pleased with this pause of persecution, that I did not reflect how much his absence had exceeded the usual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting subsistence. I then suddenly contracted my expenses, but was unwilling to supplicate for assistance. Necessity, however, soon overcame my modesty or my pride, and I applied to him by letter, but had no answer. I writ in terms more pressing, but without effect. I then sent an agent to inquire after him, who informed me that he had quitted his house, and was gone with his family to reside for some time upon his estate in Ireland.

However shocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and therefore, by the sale of my clothes, I supported myself, expecting that every post would bring me relief. Thus I passed seven months between hope and dejection, in a gradual approach to poverty and distress, emaciated with discontent, and bewildered with uncertainty. At last, my landlady, after many hints of the necessity of a new lover, took the opportunity of my absence to search my boxes, and, missing some of my apparel, seized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

To remonstrate against legal cruelty was vain: to supplicate obdurate brutality was hopeless. I went away I knew not whither, and wandered about without any settled purpose, unacquainted with the usual expedients of misery, unqualified for laborious offices, afraid to meet an eye that had seen me before, and hopeless of relief from those who were strangers to my former condition. Night came on in the midst of my distraction, and I still continued to wander till the menaces of the watch obliged me to shelter myself in a covered passage.

Next day, I procured a lodging in the backward garret of a mean house, and employed my landlady to inquire for a service. My applica

tions were generally rejected for want of a character. At length I was received at a draper's; but when it was known to my mistress that I had only one gown, and that of silk, she was of opinion that I looked like a thief, and without warning hurried me away. I then tried to support myself by my needle; and, by my landlady's recommendation, obtained a little work from a shop, and for three weeks lived without repining; but when my punctuality had gained me so much reputation that I was trusted to make up a head of some value, one of my fellow lodgers stole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a prosecution.

Thus driven again into the streets, I lived upon the least that could support me, and at night accommodated myself under pent-houses as well as I could. At length I became absolutely penniless, and, having strolled all day without sustenance, was, at the close of evening, accosted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refused him with hesitation; he seized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring house, where when he saw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes swelling with tears, he spurned me from him, and bade me cant and whine in some other place; he for his part would take care of his pockets.

I still continued to stand in the way, having scarcely strength to walk further, when another soon addressed me in the same manner. When he saw the same tokens of calamity, he considered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and therefore quickly made overtures, which I had no longer firmness to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedness, and then abandoned to my former condition, from which I was delivered by another keeper.

In this abject state, I have now passed four years, the drudge of extortion and the sport of drunkenness; sometimes the property of one man, and sometimes the common prey of accidental lewdness; at one time tricked up for sale by the mistress of a brothel; at another begging in the streets to be relieved from hunger by wickedness; without any hope in the day but of finding some whom folly or excess may expose to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but such as guilt and terror impress upon me.

If those who pass their days in plenty and security, could visit for an hour the dismal receptacles to which the prostitute retires from her nocturnal excursions, and see the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghastly with famine, nauseous with filth, and noisome with disease: it would not be very easy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them against compassion, or to repress the desire which they must immediately feel to rescue such numbers of human beings from a state so dreadful.

It is said that in France they annually evacuate their streets, and ship their prostitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infest this city had the same opportunity of escaping from their miseries, I believe very little force would be necessary; for who among them can dread any change? Many of us indeed are wholly unqualified for any but most servile employments, and those perhaps would require the care of a magistrate to hinder them from following the same practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation, and would gladly be delivered on any terms from the necessity of guilt, and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city can afford opportunities for open prostitution, and where the eye of justice can attend to individuals, those who cannot be made good may be restrained from mischief. For my part, I should exult at the privilege of banishment, and think myself happy in any region that should restore me once again to honesty and peace.

I am, Sir, &c.

MISELLA.

No. 172.] SATURDAY, Nov, 9, 1751,

Sæpe rogare soles qualis sim, Prisce, futurus
Si fiam locuples; simque repente potens.
Quemquam posse putas mores narrare futuros?
Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris. MART

Priscus, you've often asked me how I'd live,
Should fate at once both wealth and honour give,
What soul his future conduct can foresee?
Tell me what sort of lion you would be.

F. LEWIS

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners; and that it is difficult to conjecture from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act, if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed, that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies than blossom into goodness.

Many observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete, for want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high and low stations, only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their desires, or as they are more or less restrained by human censures. Many vitiate their principles in the acquisition of riches; and who can wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not uncommon, yet approaches not so nearly to universality, as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment, or heat of declamation?

Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will for ever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life, leave us so far behind that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by pregnosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to an eye, thus sharpened by malignity, some stains which lay concealed and unregarded, while none thought it their interest to discover

them; nor can the most circumspect attention, or steady rectitude, escape blame from censors who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes, which concur in every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in his advancement. We rate ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are likewise easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality; when he is received with ceremony, distance and respect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions.

It must however be confessed, that as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation, not to lose his reason in unbounded riot, when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent, by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value, have power for a time to seize the imagination. A Virginian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key. We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this American amusement; yet I doubt whether this paper will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty.

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himself, and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive and oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the co-operation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is to be very little acquainted with the world.

De l'absolu pouvoir vous ignorez l'yvresse,
Et du lache flateur la voix enchanteresse.

Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great.

MISS A. W.

He that can do much good or harm will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society, seldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtund remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance and approbation; but vice, spiritless and timorous, seeks the shelter of crowds, and support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weakness and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desires.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations, cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

No. 173.] TUESDAY, NOV. 12, 1751.

———— *Quo virtus, quo ferat error.* HOR.

Now say, where virtue stops, and vice begins?

As any action or posture, long continued, will distort and disfigure the limbs; so the mind likewise is crippled and contracted by perpetual application to the same set of ideas. It is easy to guess the trade of an artisan by his knees, his fingers, or his shoulders: and there are few among men of the more liberal professions, whose minds do not carry the brand of their calling, or whose conversation does not quickly discover to what class of the community they belong.

These peculiarities have been of great use, in the general hostility which every part of mankind exercises against the rest, to furnish insults and sarcasms. Every art has its dialect, uncouth and ungrateful to all whom custom has not reconciled to its sound, and which therefore be-

comes ridiculous by a slight misapplication, or unnecessary repetition.

The general reproach with which ignorance revenges the superciliousness of learning, is that of pedantry; a censure which every man incurs, who has at any time the misfortune to talk to those who cannot understand him, and by which the modest and timorous are sometimes frighted from the display of their acquisitions, and the exertion of their powers.

The name of a pedant is so formidable to young men when they first sally from their colleges, and is so liberally scattered by those who mean to boast their elegance of education, easiness of manners, and knowledge of the world, that it seems to require particular consideration; since, perhaps, if it were once understood, many a heart might be freed from painful apprehensions, and many a tongue delivered from restraint.

Pedantry is the unseasonable ostentation of learning. It may be discovered either in the choice of a subject, or in the manner of treating it. He is undoubtedly guilty of pedantry, who, when he has made himself master of some abstruse and uncultivated part of knowledge, obtrudes his remarks and discoveries upon those whom he believes unable to judge of his proficiency, and from whom, as he cannot fear contradiction, he cannot properly expect applause.

To this error the student is sometimes betrayed by the natural recurrence of the mind to its common employment, by the pleasure which every man receives from the recollection of pleasing images, and the desire of dwelling upon topics on which he knows himself able to speak with justness. But because we are seldom so far prejudiced in favour of each other, as to search out for palliations, this failure of politeness is imputed always to vanity; and the harmless collegiate, who, perhaps, intended entertainment and instruction, or at worst only spoke without sufficient reflection upon the character of his hearers, is censured as arrogant or overbearing, and eager to extend his renown, in contempt of the convenience of society, and the laws of conversation.

All discourse of which others cannot partake, is not only an irksome usurpation of the time devoted to pleasure and entertainment, but, what never fails to excite very keen resentment, an insolent assertion of superiority, and a triumph over less enlightened understandings. The pedant is, therefore, not only heard with weariness, but malignity; and those who conceive themselves insulted by his knowledge, never fail to tell with acrimony how injudiciously it was exerted.

To avoid this dangerous imputation, scholars sometimes divest themselves with too much haste of their academical formality, and, in their endeavours to accommodate their notions and their style to common conceptions, talk rather of any thing than of that which they understand, and sink into insipidity of sentiment and meanness sider argument or criticism as perpetually inter- of expression.

There prevails among men of letters an opinion, that all appearance of science is particularly hateful to women; and that therefore, whoever desires to be well received in female assemblies, must qualify himself by a total rejection of all that is serious, rational or important; must contradicted; and devote all his attention to trifles, and all his eloquence to compliment.

Students often form their notions of the present generation from the writings of the past, and are very early informed of those changes which the gradual diffusion of knowledge, or the sudden caprice of fashion, produces in the world. Whatever might be the state of female literature in the last century, there is now no longer any danger lest the scholar should want an adequate audience at the tea-table; and whoever thinks it necessary to regulate his conversation by antiquated rules, will be rather despised for his futility than caressed for his politeness.

To talk intentionally in a manner above the comprehension of those whom we address, is unquestionable pedantry; but surely complaisance, requires, that no man should, without proof, conclude his company incapable of following him to the highest elevation of his fancy, or the utmost extent of his knowledge. It is always safer to err in favour of others than of ourselves, and therefore we seldom hazard much by endeavouring to excel.

It ought at least to be the care of learning, when she quits her exaltation, to descend with dignity. Nothing is more despicable than the airiness and jocularity of a man bred to severe science, and solitary meditation. To trifle agreeably is a secret which schools cannot impart; that gay negligence and vivacious levity, which charm down resistance wherever they appear, are never attainable by him who, having spent his first years among the dust of libraries, enters late into the gay world with an unpliant attention and established habits.

It is observed in the panegyric on Fabricius the mechanist, that, though forced by public employments into mingled conversation, he never lost the modesty and seriousness of the convent, nor drew ridicule upon himself by affected imitation of fashionable life. To the same praise every man devoted to learning ought to aspire. If he attempts the softer arts of pleasing, and endeavours to learn the grateful bow and the familiar embrace, the insinuating accent and the general smile, he will lose the respect due to the character of learning, without arriving at the envied honour of doing nothing with elegance and facility.

Theophrastus was discovered not to be a native of Athens, by so strict an adherence to the Attic dialect, as showed that he had learned it not by custom, but by rule. A man not early formed to habitual elegance, betrays in like manner the effects of his education, by an unnecessary anxiety of behaviour. It is as possible to become pedantic by fear of pedantry, as to be troublesome by ill-timed civility. There is no kind of impertinence more justly censurable, than his who is always labouring to level thoughts to intellects higher than his own; who apologizes for every word which his own narrowness of converse inclines him to think unusual; keeps the exuberance of his faculties under visible restraint; is solicitous to anticipate inquiries by needless explanations; and endeavours to shade his own abilities, lest weak eyes should be dazzled with their lustre.

No. 174.] Saturday, Nov. 15, 1751.

Fœnum habet in cornu; longe fuge; dummodo risum
Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico. HOR

Yonder he drives—avoid that furious beast:
If he may have his jest, he never cares
At whose expense; nor friend nor patron spares.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Mr. Rambler,

The laws of social benevolence require, that every man should endeavour to assist others by his experience. He that has at last escaped into port from the fluctuations of chance, and the gusts of opposition, ought to make some improvements in the chart of life, by marking the rocks on which he has been dashed, and the shallows where he has been stranded.

The error into which I was betrayed, when custom first gave me up to my own direction, is very frequently incident to the quick, the sprightly, the fearless, and the gay; to all whose ardour hurries them into precipitate execution of their designs, and imprudent declaration of their opinions; who seldom count the cost of pleasure, or examine the distant consequences of any practice that flatters them with immediate gratification.

I came forth into the crowded world with the usual juvenile ambition, and desired nothing beyond the title of a wit. Money I considered as below my care; for I saw such multitudes grow rich without understanding, that I could not forbear to look on wealth as an acquisition easy to industry directed by genius, and therefore threw it aside as a secondary convenience, to be procured when my principal wish should be satisfied, and my claim to intellectual excellence universally acknowledged.

With this view I regulated my behaviour in public, and exercised my meditations in solitude. My life was divided between the care of providing topics for the entertainment of my company, and that of collecting company worthy to be entertained; for I soon found, that wit, like every other power, has its boundaries; that its success depends upon the aptitude of others to receive impressions; and that as some bodies, indissoluble by heat, can set the furnace and crucible at defiance, there are minds upon which the rays of fancy may be pointed without effect, and which no fire of sentiment can agitate or exalt.

It was, however, not long, before I fitted myself with a set of companions who knew how to laugh, and to whom no other recommendation was necessary than the power of striking out a jest. Among those I fixed my residence, and for a time enjoyed the felicity of disturbing the neighbours every night with the obstreperous applause which my sallies forced from the audience. The reputation of our club every day increased, and as my flights and remarks were circulated by my admirers, every day brought new solicitations for admission into our society.

To support this perpetual fund of merriment, I frequented every place of concourse, cultivated the acquaintance of all the fashionable race, and passed the day in a continual succession of visits, in which I collected a treasure of pleasantry for the expenses of the evening. Whatever error of conduct I could discover, whatever peculiarity of manner I could observe, whatever weakness was betrayed by confidence, whatever lapse was suffered by neglect, all was drawn together for the diversion of my wild companions, who when they had been taught the art of ridicule, never failed to signalize themselves by a zealous imitation, and filled the town on the ensuing day with scandal and vexation, with merriment and shame.

I can scarcely believe, when I recollect my own practice, that I could have been so far deluded with petty praise, as to divulge the secrets of trust, and to expose the levities of frankness; to waylay the walks of the cautious, and surprise the security of the thoughtless. Yet it is certain, that for many years I heard nothing but with design to tell it, and saw nothing with any other curiosity than after some failure that might furnish out a jest.

My heart, indeed, acquits me of deliberate malignity, or interested insidiousness. I had no other purpose than to heighten the pleasure of laughter by communication, nor ever raised any pecuniary advantage from the calamities of others. I led weakness and negligence into difficulties, only that I might divert myself with their perplexities and distresses; and violated every law of friendship, with no other hope than that of gaining the reputation of smartness and waggery.

I would not be understood to charge myself with any crimes of the atrocious or destructive kind. I never betrayed an heir to gamesters, or a girl to debauchees; never intercepted the kindness of a patron, or sported away the reputation of innocence. My delight was only in petty mischief and momentary vexations, and my acuteness was employed not upon fraud and oppression, which it had been meritorious to detect, but upon harmless ignorance or absurdity, prejudice or mistake.

This inquiry I pursued with so much diligence and sagacity, that I was able to relate, of every man whom I knew, some blunder or miscarriage; to betray the most circumspect of my friends into follies, by a judicious flattery of his predominant passion; or expose him to contempt, by placing him in circumstances which put his prejudices into action, brought to view his natural defects, or drew the attention of the company on his airs of affectation.

The power had been possessed in vain if it had never been exerted; and it was not my custom to let any arts of jocularity remain unemployed. My impatience of applause brought me always early to the place of entertainment; and I seldom failed to lay a scheme with the small knot that first gathered round me, by which some of those whom we expected might be made subservient to our sport. Every man has some favourite topic of conversation, on which, by a feigned seriousness of attention, he may be drawn to expatiate without end. Every man has some habitual contortion of body, or established mode of expression, which never fails to raise mirth if it be pointed out to notice. By premonitions of these particularities I secured our pleasantry. Our companion entered with his usual gayety, and began to partake of our noisy cheerfulness, when the conversation was imperceptibly diverted to a subject which pressed upon his tender part, and extorted the expected shrug, the customary exclamation, or the predicted remark. A general clamour of joy then burst from all

that were admitted to the stratagem. Our mirth was often increased by the triumph of him that occasioned it; for, as we do not hastily form conclusions against ourselves, seldom any one suspected that he had exhilarated us otherwise than by his wit.

You will hear, I believe, with very little surprise that by this conduct I had in a short time united mankind against me, and that every tongue was diligent in prevention or revenge. I soon perceived myself regarded with malevolence or distrust, but wondered what had been discovered in me either terrible or hateful. I had invaded no man's property; I had rivalled no man's claims; nor had ever engaged in any of those attempts which provoke the jealousy of ambition, or the rage of faction. I had lived but to laugh, and make others laugh; and believed that I was loved by all who caressed, and favoured by all who applauded me. I never imagined that he who, in the mirth of a nocturnal revel, concurred in ridiculing his friend, would consider in a cooler hour, that the same trick might be played against himself; or that, even where there is no sense of danger, the natural pride of human nature rises against him, who, by general censures, lays claim to general superiority.

I was convinced, by a total desertion, of the impropriety of my conduct; every man avoided, and cautioned others to avoid me. Wherever I came, I found silence and dejection, coldness and terror. No one would venture to speak, lest he should lay himself open to unfavourable representations; the company, however numerous dropped off at my entrance, upon various pretences; and, if I retired to avoid the shame of being left, I heard confidence and mirth revive at my departure.

If those whom I had thus offended could have contented themselves with repaying one insult for another, and kept up the war only by a reciprocation of sarcasms, they might have perhaps vexed, but would never much have hurt me; for no man heartily hates him at whom he can laugh. But these wounds which they give me as they fly, are without cure; this alarm which they spread by their solicitude to escape me, excludes me from all friendship and from all pleasure. I am condemned to pass a long interval of my life in solitude, as a man suspected of infection is refused admission into cities; and must linger in obscurity, till my conduct shall convince the world, that I may be approached without hazard. I am, &c.

DICACULUS.

No. 175.] TUESDAY, Nov. 19, 1751.

Rari quippe boni, numero vix sunt totidem quot Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili. JUV.

Good men are scarce, the just are thinly sown;
They thrive but ill, nor can they last when grown,
And should we count them, and our store compile,
Yet Thebes more gates could show, more mouths the Nile.
CREECH.

NONE of the axioms of wisdom which recommend the ancient sages to veneration, seems to have required less extent of knowledge or perspicacity of penetration, than the remark of Bias, that *οἱ πλέονες κακοι, the majority are wicked.*

The depravity of mankind is so easily discoverable that nothing but the desert or the cell can exclude it from notice. The knowledge of crimes intrudes uncalled and undesired. They whom their abstraction from common occurrences hinders from seeing iniquity, will quickly have their attention awakened by feeling it. Even he who ventures not into the world, may learn its corruption in his closet. For what are treatises of morality, but persuasives to the practice of duties, for which no arguments would be necessary, but that we are continually tempted to violate or neglect them? What are all the records of history, but narratives of successive villanies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres, and wars?

But, perhaps, the excellence of aphorisms consists not so much in the expression of some rare or abstruse sentiment, as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truth in a few words. We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because for a time they are not remembered; and he may therefore be justly numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences, that may be easily impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.

However those who have passed through half the life of man, may now wonder that any should require to be cautioned against corruption, they will find, that they have themselves purchased their conviction by many disappointments and vexations which an earlier knowledge would have spared them; and may see on every side some entangling themselves in perplexities, and some sinking into ruin, by ignorance or neglect of the maxim of Bias.

Every day sends out, in quest of pleasure and distinction, some heir fondled in ignorance, and flattered into pride. He comes forth with all the confidence of a spirit unacquainted with superiors, and all the benevolence of a mind not yet irritated by opposition, alarmed by fraud, or embittered by cruelty. He loves all, because he imagines himself the universal favourite. Every exchange of salutation produces new acquaintance, and every acquaintance kindles into friendship.

Every season brings a new flight of beauties into the world, who have hitherto heard only of their own charms, and imagine that the heart feels no passion but that of love. They are seen surrounded by admirers whom they credit, because they tell them only what is heard with delight. Whoever gazes upon them is a lover; and whoever forces a sigh, is pining in despair.

He surely is a useful monitor, who inculcates to these thoughtless strangers, that the *majority are wicked;* who informs them, that the train which wealth and beauty draw after them is lured only by the scent of prey; and that, perhaps, among all those who crowd about them with professions and flatteries, there is not one who does not hope for some opportunity to devour or betray them, to glut himself by their destruction, or to share their spoils with a stronger savage.

Virtue, presented singly to the imagination or the reason, is so well recommended by its own graces, and so strongly supported by arguments,

that a good man wonders how any can be bad; and they who are ignorant of the force of passion and interest, who never observed the arts of seduction, the contagion of example, the gradual descent from one crime to another, or the insensible depravation of the principles by loose conversation, naturally expect to find integrity in every bosom, and veracity on every tongue.

It is, indeed, impossible not to hear from those who have lived longer, of wrongs and falsehoods, of violence and circumvention; but such narratives are commonly regarded by the young, the heady, and the confident, as nothing more than the murmurs of peevishness, or the dreams of dotage; and, notwithstanding all the documents of hoary wisdom, we commonly plunge into the world fearless and credulous without any foresight of danger, or apprehension of deceit.

I have remarked, in a former paper, that credulity is the common failing of unexperienced virtue; and that he who is spontaneously suspicious, may be justly charged with radical corruption; for, if he has not known the prevalence of dishonesty by information, nor had time to observe it with his own eyes, whence can he take his measures of judgment but from himself?

They who best deserve to escape the snares of artifice, are most likely to be entangled. He that endeavours to live for the good of others, must always be exposed to the arts of them who live only for themselves, unless he is taught by timely precepts the caution required in common transactions, and shown at a distance the pitfalls of treachery.

To youth, therefore, it should be carefully inculcated, that, to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and justice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous, and that every coast will afford a harbour.

To enumerate the various motives to deceit and injury, would be to count all the desires that prevail among the sons of men; since there is no ambition however petty, no wish however absurd, that by indulgence will not be enabled to overpower the influence of virtue. Many there are, who openly and almost professedly regulate all their conduct by their love of money; who have no other reason for action or forbearance, for compliance or refusal, than that they hope to gain more by one than by the other. These are indeed the meanest and cruellest of human beings, a race with whom, as with some pestiferous animals, the whole creation seems to be at war; but who, however detested or scorned, long continue to add heap to heap, and, when they have reduced one to beggary, are still permitted to fasten on another.

Others, yet less rationally wicked, pass their lives in mischief, because they cannot bear the sight of success, and mark out every man for hatred, whose fame or fortune they believe increasing.

Many, who have not advanced to these degrees of guilt, are yet wholly unqualified for friendship, and unable to maintain any constant or regular course of kindness. Happiness may be destroyed not only by union with the man who is apparently the slave of interest, but with him whom a wild opinion of the dignity of perseverance, in whatever cause, disposes to pursue every injury with unwearied and perpetual resentment; with him whose vanity inclines him to consider every man as a rival in every pretension; with him whose airy negligence puts his friend's affairs or secrets in continual hazard, and who thinks his forgetfulness of others excused by his inattention to himself; and with him whose inconstancy ranges without any settled rule of choice through varieties of friendship, and who adopts and dismisses favourites by the sudden impulse of caprice.

Thus numerous are the dangers to which the converse of mankind exposes us, and which can be avoided only by prudent distrust. He therefore that, remembering this salutary maxim learns early to withhold his fondness from fair appearances, will have reason to pay some honours to Bias of Priene, who enabled him to become wise without the cost of experience.

No. 176.] SATURDAY, Nov. 23, 1751

——*Naso suspendere adunco.* HOR

On me you turn the nose.——

THERE are many vexatious accidents and uneasy situations which raise little compassion for the sufferer, and which no man but those whom they immediately distress can regard with seriousness. Petty mischiefs, that have no influence on futurity, nor extend their effects to the rest of life, are always seen with a kind of malicious pleasure. A mistake or embarrassment, which for the present moment fills the face with blushes, and the mind with confusion, will have no other effect upon those who observe it, than that of convulsing them with irresistible laughter. Some circumstances of misery are so powerfully ridiculous, that neither kindness nor duty can withstand them; they bear down love, interest, and reverence, and force the friend, the dependent, or the child, to give way to instantaneous motions of merriment.

Among the principal of comic calamities may be reckoned the pain which an author, not yet hardened into insensibility, feels at the onset of a furious critic, whose age, rank, or fortune, gives him confidence to speak without reserve; who heaps one objection upon another, and obtrudes his remarks, and enforces his corrections, without tenderness or awe.

The author, full of the importance of his work, and anxious for the justification of every syllable, starts and kindles at the slightest attack; the critic, eager to establish his superiority, triumphing in every discovery of failure, and zealous to impress the cogency of his arguments pursues him from line to line without cessation or remorse. The critic, who hazards little, proceeds with vehemence, impetuosity, and fearlessness; the author, whose quiet and fame, and life and immortality, are involved in the controversy, tries every art of subterfuge and defence; maintains modestly what he resolves never to yield, and yields unwillingly what cannot be maintained. The critic's purpose is to conquer, the author only hopes to escape; the critic therefore knits his brow, and raises his voice, and rejoices whenever he perceives any tokens of pain excited by the pressure of his assertions, or the

point of his sarcasms. The author, whose endeavour is at once to mollify and elude his persecutor, composes his features and softens his accent, breaks the force of assault by retreat, and rather steps aside than flies or advances.

As it very seldom happens that the rage of extemporary criticism inflicts fatal or lasting wounds, I know not that the laws of benevolence entitle this distress to much sympathy. The diversion of baiting an author has the sanction of all ages and nations, and it is more lawful than the sport of teasing other animals, because, for the most part, he comes voluntarily to the stake, furnished, as he imagines, by the patron powers of literature, with resistless weapons and impenetrable armour, with the mail of the boar of Eyrmanth, and the paws of the lion of Nemea.

But the works of genius are sometimes produced by other motives than vanity; and he whom necessity or duty enforces to write, is not always so well satisfied with himself, as not to be discouraged by censorious impudence. It may therefore be necessary to consider how they whom publication lays open to the insults of such as their obscurity secures against reprisals, may extricate themselves from unexpected encounters.

Vida, a man of considerable skill in the politics of literature, directs his pupil wholly to abandon his defence, and, even when he can irrefragably refute all objections, to suffer tamely the exultations of his antagonist.

This rule may perhaps be just, when advice is asked, and severity solicited, because no man tells his opinion so freely as when he imagines it received with implicit veneration; and critics ought never to be consulted, but while errors may yet be rectified or insipidity suppressed. But when the book has once been dismissed into the world, and can be no more retouched, I know not whether a very different conduct should not be prescribed, and whether firmness and spirit may not sometimes be of use to overpower arrogance and repel brutality. Softness, diffidence, and moderation will often be mistaken for imbecility and dejection; they lure cowardice to the attack by the hopes of easy victory, and it will soon be found that he whom every man thinks he can conquer, shall never be at peace.

The animadversions of critics are commonly such as may easily provoke the sedatest writer to some quickness of resentment and asperity of reply. A man who by long consideration has familiarized a subject to his own mind, carefully surveyed the series of his thoughts, and planned all the parts of his composition into a regular dependance on each other, will often start at the sinistrous interpretations or absurd remarks of haste and ignorance, and wonder by what infatuation they have been led away from the obvious sense, and upon what peculiar principles of judgment they decide against him.

The eye of the intellect, like that of the body, is not equally perfect in all, nor equally adapted in any to all objects; the end of criticism is to supply its defects; rules are the instruments of mental vision, which may indeed assist our faculties when properly used, but produce confusion and obscurity by unskilful application.

Some seem always to read with the microscope of criticism, and employ their whole attention upon minute elegance, or faults scarcely visible to common observation. The dissonance of a syllable, the recurrence of the same sound, the repetition of a particle, the smallest deviation from propriety, the slightest defect in construction or arrangement, swell before their eyes into enormities. As they discern with great exactness, they comprehend but a narrow compass, and know nothing of the justness of the design, the general spirit of the performance, the artifice of connexion, or the harmony of the parts; they never conceive how small a proportion that which they are busy in contemplating bears to the whole, or how the petty inaccuracies with which they are offended, are absorbed and lost in general excellence.

Others are furnished by criticism with a telescope. They see with great clearness whatever is too remote to be discovered by the rest of mankind, but are totally blind to all that lies immediately before them. They discover in every passage some secret meaning, some remote allusion, some artful allegory, or some occult imitation, which no other reader ever suspected; but they have no perception of the cogency of arguments, the force of pathetic sentiments, the various colours of diction, or the flowery embellishments of fancy; of all that engages the attention of others they are totally insensible, while they pry into worlds of conjecture, and amuse themselves with phantoms in the clouds.

In criticism, as in every other art, we fail sometimes by our weakness, but more frequently by our fault. We are sometimes bewildered by ignorance, and sometimes by prejudice; but we seldom deviate far from the right, but when we deliver ourselves up to the direction of vanity.

No. 177.] Tuesday, Nov. 26, 1751.

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas. MART.

Those things which now seem frivolous and slight,
Will be of serious consequence to you,
When they have made you once ridiculous.
ROSCOMMON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

When I was, at the usual time, about to enter upon the profession to which my friends had destined me, being summoned, by the death of my father, into the country, I found myself master of an unexpected sum of money, and of an estate, which, though not large, was, in my opinion, sufficient to support me in a condition far preferable to the fatigue, dependance, and uncertainty of any gainful occupation. I therefore resolved to devote the rest of my life wholly to curiosity, and without any confinement of my excursions, or termination of my views, to wander over the boundless regions of general knowledge.

This scheme of life seemed pregnant with inexhaustible variety, and therefore I could not forbear to congratulate myself upon the wisdom of my choice. I furnished a large room with all conveniences for study; collected books of every kind; quitted every science at the first perception of disgust; returned to it again as soon as my former ardour happened to revive; and having no rival to depress me by comparison, nor any critic to alarm me with objections, I spent day after day in profound tranquillity, with only so

much complaisance in my own improvements, as served to excite and animate my application.

Thus I lived for some years with complete acquiescence in my own plan of conduct, rising early to read, and dividing the latter part of the day between economy, exercise, and reflection, But in time I began to find my mind contracted and stiffened by solitude. My ease and elegance were sensibly impaired; I was no longer able to accommodate myself with readiness to the accidental current of conversation; my notions grew particular and paradoxical, and my phraseology formal and unfashionable; I spoke, on common occasions, the language of books. My quickness of apprehension, and celerity of reply, had entirely deserted me; when I delivered my opinion, or detailed my knowledge, I was bewildered by an unseasonable interrogatory, disconcerted by any slight opposition, and overwhelmed and lost in dejection, when the smallest advantage was gained against me in dispute. I became decisive and dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, perpetually jealous of my character, insolent to such as acknowledged my superiority, and sullen and malignant to all who refused to receive my dictates.

This I soon discovered to be one of those intellectual diseases which a wise man should make haste to cure. I therefore resolved for a time to shut my books, and learn again the art of conversation; to defecate and clear my mind by brisker motions and stronger impulses; and to unite myself once more to the living generation.

For this purpose I hasted to London, and entreated one of my academical acquaintances to introduce me into some of the little societies of literature which are formed in taverns and coffee-houses. He was pleased with an opportunity of showing me to his friends, and soon obtained me admission among a select company of curious men, who met once a week to exhilarate their studies and compare their acquisitions.

The eldest and most venerable of this society was Hirsutus, who, after the first civilities of my reception, found means to introduce the mention of his favourite studies, by a severe censure of those who want the due regard for their native country. He informed me that he had early withdrawn his attention from foreign trifles, and that, since he began to addict his mind to serious and manly studies, he had very carefully amassed all the English books that were printed in the black character. This search he had pursued so diligently, that he was able to show the deficiencies of the best catalogues. He had long since completed his Caxton, had three sheets of Treveris unknown to the antiquaries, and wanted to a perfect Pynson but two volumes, of which one was promised him as a legacy by its present possessor, and the other he was resolved to buy at whatever price, when Quisquilius's library should be sold. Hirsutus had no other reason for the valuing or slighting a book, than that it was printed in the Roman or the Gothic letter, nor any ideas but such as his favourite volumes had supplied; when he was serious, he expatiated on the narratives of Johan de Trevisa, and, when he was merry, regaled us with a quotation from the Shippe of Foles.

While I was listening to this hoary student, Ferratus entered in a hurry, and informed us with the abruptness of ecstacy, that his set of halfpence was now complete; he had just received in a handful of change the piece that he had so long been seeking, and could now defy mankind to outgo his collection of English copper.

Chartophylax then observed how fatally human sagacity was sometimes baffled, and how often the most valuable discoveries are made by chance. He had employed himself and his emissaries seven years at great expense to perfect his series of Gazettes, but had long wanted a single paper, which, when he despaired of obtaining it, was sent him wrapped round a parcel of tobacco.

Cantilenus turned all his thoughts upon old ballads, for he considered them as the genuine records of the national taste. He offered to show me a copy of The Children in the Wood, which he firmly believed to be of the first edition, and by the help of which the text might be freed from several corruptions, if this age of barbarity had any claim to such favours from him.

Many were admitted into this society as inferior members, because they had collected old prints and neglected pamphlets, or possessed some fragment of antiquity, as the seal of an ancient corporation, the charter of a religious house, the genealogy of a family extinct, or a letter written in the reign of Elizabeth.

Every one of these virtuosos looked on all his associates as wretches of depraved taste and narrow notions. Their conversation was, therefore, fretful and waspish, their behaviour brutal, their merriment bluntly sarcastic, and their seriousness gloomy and suspicious. They were totally ignorant of all that passes, or has lately passed, in the world; unable to discuss any question of religious, political, or military knowledge; equally strangers to science and politer learning; and without any wish to improve their minds, or any other pleasure than that of displaying rarities of which they would not suffer others to make the proper use.

Hirsutus graciously informed me, that the number of their society was limited, but that I might sometimes attend as an auditor. I was pleased to find myself in no danger of an honour which I could not have willingly accepted, nor gracefully refused, and left them without any intention of returning; for I soon found that the suppression of those habits with which I was vitiated, required association with men very different from this solemn race.

I am, Sir, &c. VIVACULUS.

It is natural to feel grief or indignation, when any thing necessary or useful is wantonly wasted, or negligently destroyed; and therefore my correspondent cannot be blamed for looking with uneasiness on the waste of life. Leisure and curiosity might soon make great advances in useful knowledge, were they not diverted by minute emulation and laborious trifles. It may, however, somewhat mollify his anger to reflect, that perhaps none of the assembly which he describes was capable of any nobler employment, and that he who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing. Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has at least this use, that it rescues the day from idleness, and he that is never idle will not often be vicious.

No. 178.] Saturday, Nov. 30, 1751.

Pars sanitatis velle sanari fuit. SENECA.

To yield to remedies is half the cure.

Pythagoras is reported to have required from those whom he instructed in philosophy a probationary silence of five years. Whether this prohibition of speech extended to all the parts of his time, as seems generally to be supposed, or was to be observed only in the school or in the presence of their master, as is more probable, it was sufficient to discover the pupil's disposition; to try whether he was willing to pay the price of learning; or whether he was one of those whose ardour was rather violent than lasting, and who expected to grow wise on other terms than those of patience and obedience.

Many of the blessings universally desired, are very frequently wanted, because most men, when they should labour, content themselves to complain, and rather linger in a state in which they cannot be at rest, than improve their condition by vigour and resolution.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immoveable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other, that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Of two objects tempting at a distance on contrary sides, it is impossible to approach one but by receding from the other; by long deliberation and dilatory projects, they may be both lost, but can never be both gained. It is, therefore, necessary to compare them, and, when we have determined the preference, to withdraw our eyes and our thoughts at once from that which reason directs us to reject. This is more necessary, if that which we are forsaking has the power of delighting the senses, or firing the fancy. He that once turns aside to the allurements of unlawful pleasure can have no security that he shall ever regain the paths of virtue.

The philosophic goddess of Boethius, having related the story of Orpheus, who, when he had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light, concludes with a very elegant and forcible application. *Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your minds to the illuminations of Heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable: for he that is once so far overcome as to turn back his eyes towards the infernal caverns, loses at the first sight all that influence which attracted him on high.*

Vos hæc fabula respicit.
Quicunque in superum diem
Mentem ducere quæritis.
Nam qui Tartareum in specus
Victus lumina flexerit,
Quidquid præcipuum trahit.
Perdit, dum videt inferos.

It may be observed, in general, that the future is purchased by the present. It is not possible to secure distant or permanent happiness but by the forbearance of some immediate gratification. This is so evidently true with regard to the whole of our existence, that all the precepts of theology have no other tendency than to enforce a life of faith; a life not regulated by our senses but our belief; a life in which pleasures are to be refused for fear of invisible punishments, and calamities sometimes to be sought, and always endured, in hope of rewards that shall be obtained in another state.

Even if we take into our view only that particle of our duration which is terminated by the grave, it will be found that we cannot enjoy one part of life beyond the common limitations of pleasure, but by anticipating some of the satisfaction which should exhilarate the following years. The heat of youth may spread happiness into wild luxuriance; but the radical vigour requisite to make it perennial is exhausted, and all that can be hoped afterwards is languor and sterility.

The reigning error of mankind is, that we are not content with the conditions on which the goods of life are granted. No man is insensible of the value of knowledge, the advantages of health, or the convenience of plenty, but every day shows us those on whom the conviction is without effect.

Knowledge is praised and desired by multitudes whom her charms could never rouse from the couch of sloth; whom the faintest invitation of pleasure draws away from their studies; to whom any other method of wearing out the day is more eligible than the use of books, and who are more easily engaged by any conversation, than such as may rectify their notions or enlarge their comprehension.

Every man that has felt pain, knows how little all other comforts can gladden him to whom health is denied. Yet who is there does not sometimes hazard it for the enjoyment of an hour? All assemblies of jollity, all places of public entertainment, exhibit examples of strength wasting in riot, and beauty withering in irregularity; nor is it easy to enter a house in which part of the family is not groaning in repentance of past intemperance, and part admitting disease by negligence, or soliciting it by luxury.

There is no pleasure which men of every age and sect have more generally agreed to mention with contempt than the gratifications of the palate; an entertainment so far removed from intellectual happiness, that scarcely the most shameless of the sensual herd have dared to defend it; yet even to this, the lowest of our delights, to this, though neither quick nor lasting, is health with all its activity and sprightliness daily sacrificed; and for this are half the miseries endured which urge impatience to call on death.

The whole world is put in motion by the wish for riches and the dread of poverty. Who then would not imagine that such conduct as will inevitably destroy what all are thus labouring to acquire, must generally be avoided? That he who spends more than he receives, must in time become indigent, cannot be doubted; but how evident soever this consequence may appear, the spendthrift moves in the whirl of pleasure with too much rapidity to keep it before his eyes, and, in the intoxication of gayety, grows every day poorer without any such sense of approaching ruin as is sufficient to awake him into caution.

Many complaints are made of the misery of

life; and indeed it must be confessed that we are subject to calamities by which the good and bad, the diligent and slothful, the vigilant and heedless are equally afflicted. But surely, though some indulgence may be allowed to groans extorted by inevitable misery, no man has a right to repine at evils which, against warning, against experience, he deliberately and leisurely brings upon his own head; or to consider himself as debarred from happiness by such obstacles as resolution may break or dexterity may put aside.

Great numbers who quarrel with their condition, have wanted not the power but the will to obtain a better state. They have never contemplated the difference between good and evil sufficiently to quicken aversion, or invigorate desire; they have indulged a drowsy thoughtlessness, or giddy levity; have committed the balance of choice to the management of caprice; and when they have long accustomed themselves to receive all that chance offered them, without examination, lament at last that they find themselves deceived.

No. 179.] TUESDAY, DEC. 3, 1751.

Perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat. JUV.

Democritus would feed his spleen, and shake
His sides and shoulders till he felt them ache.
DRYDEN.

"EVERY man," says Tully, "has two characters; one which he partakes with all mankind, and by which he is distinguished from brute animals; another which discriminates him from the rest of his own species, and impresses on him a manner and temper peculiar to himself: this particular character, if it be not repugnant to the laws of general humanity, it is always his business to cultivate and preserve."

Every hour furnishes some confirmation of Tully's precept. It seldom happens, that an assembly of pleasure is so happily selected, but that some one finds admission with whom the rest are deservedly offended; and it will appear, on a close inspection, that scarce any man becomes eminently disagreeable, but by a departure from his real character, and an attempt at something for which nature or education have left him unqualified.

Ignorance or dulness have indeed no power of affording delight, but they never give disgust except when they assume the dignity of knowledge, or ape the sprightliness of wit. Awkwardness and inelegance have none of those attractions by which ease and politeness take possession of the heart; but ridicule and censure seldom rise against them, unless they appear associated with that confidence which belongs only to long acquaintance with the modes of life, and to consciousness of unfailing propriety of behaviour. Deformity itself is regarded with tenderness rather than aversion, when it does not attempt to deceive the sight by dress and decoration, and to seize upon fictitious claims the prerogatives of beauty.

He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city, will see many passengers whose air and motion it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter; but if he examines what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately stalk, the formal strut, and the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance.

It has, I think, been sometimes urged in favour of affectation, that it is only a mistake of the means to a good end, and that the intention with which it is practised is always to please. If all attempts to innovate the constitutional or habitual character have really proceeded from public spirit and love of others, the world has hitherto been sufficiently ungrateful, since no return but scorn has yet been made to the most difficult of all enterprises, a contest with nature; nor has any pity been shown to the fatigues of labour which never succeeded, and the uneasiness of disguise by which nothing was concealed.

It seems therefore to be determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that he who decks himself in adscititious qualities rather purposes to command applause than impart pleasure; and he is therefore treated as a man, who, by an unreasonable ambition, usurps the place in society to which he has no right. Praise is seldom paid with willingness even to incontestable merit, and it can be no wonder that he who calls for it without desert is repulsed with universal indignation.

Affectation naturally counterfeits those excellences which are placed at the greatest distance from possibility of attainment. We are conscious of our own defects, and eagerly endeavour to supply them by artificial excellence; nor would such efforts be wholly without excuse, were they not often excited by ornamental trifles, which he, that thus anxiously struggles for the reputation of possessing them, would not have been known to want, had not his industry quickened observation.

Gelasimus passed the first part of his life in academical privacy and rural retirement, without any other conversation than that of scholars, grave, studious, and abstracted as himself. He cultivated the mathematical sciences with indefatigable diligence, discovered many useful theorems, discussed with great accuracy the resistance of fluids, and, though his priority was not generally acknowledged, was the first who fully explained all the properties of the catenarian curve.

Learning, when it rises to eminence, will be observed in time, whatever mists may happen to surround it. Gelasimus, in his forty-ninth year, was distinguished by those who have the rewards of knowledge in their hands, and called out to display his acquisitions for the honour of his country, and add dignity by his presence to philosophical assemblies. As he did not suspect his unfitness for common affairs, he felt no reluctance to obey the invitation, and what he did not feel he had yet too much honesty to feign. He entered into the world at a larger and more populous college, where his performance would be more public, and his renown further extended; and imagined that he should find his reputation universally prevalent, and the influence of learning every where the same.

His merit introduced him to splendid tables and elegant acquaintance; but he did not find himself always qualified to join in the conversation. He was distressed by civilities which he knew not how to repay, and entangled in many ceremonial perplexities from which his books and diagrams could not extricate him. He was sometimes unluckily engaged in disputes with ladies with whom algebraic axioms had no great weight; and saw many whose favour and esteem he could not but desire, to whom he was very little recommended by his theories of the tides, or his approximations to the quadrature of the circle. Gelasimus did not want penetration to discover, that no charm was more generally irresistible than that of easy facetiousness and flowing hilarity. He saw that diversion was more frequently welcome than improvement; that authority and seriousness were rather feared than loved; and that the grave scholar was a kind of imperious ally, hastily dismissed when his assistance was no longer necessary. He came to a sudden resolution of throwing off those cumbrous ornaments of learning which hindered his reception, and commenced a man of wit and jocularity. Utterly unacquainted with every topic of merriment, ignorant of the modes and follies, the vices and virtues of mankind, and unfurnished with any ideas but such as Pappus and Archimedes had given him, he began to silence all inquiries with a jest instead of a solution; extended his face with a grin, which he mistook for a smile; and, in the place of a scientific discourse, retailed in a new language, formed between the college and the tavern, the intelligence of the newspaper.

Laughter he knew, was a token of alacrity; and therefore, whatever he said or heard, he was careful not to fail in that great duty of a wit. If he asked or told the hour of the day, if he complained of heat or cold, stirred the fire, or filled a glass, removed his chair, or snuffed a candle, he always found some occasion to laugh. The jest was indeed a secret to all but himself; but habitual confidence in his own discernment hindered him from suspecting any weakness or mistake. He wondered that his wit was so little understood, but expected that his audience would comprehend it by degrees, and persisted all his life to show by gross buffoonery, how little the strongest faculties can perform beyond the limits of their own province.

No. 180.] SATURDAY, DEC. 7, 1751.

Ταῦτ' εἰδὼς σοφὸς ἰσθὶ μάτην δ' Ἐπίκουρον ἔασον
Ποῦ το κενὸν ζητεῖν, καὶ τίνες αἱ μονάδες.

AUTOMEDON.

On life, on morals, be thy thoughts employ'd;
Leave to the schools their atoms and their void.

It is somewhere related by Le Clerc, that a wealthy trader of good understanding, having the common ambition to breed his son a scholar, carried him to a university, resolving to use his own judgment in the choice of a tutor. He had been taught, by whatever intelligence, the nearest way to the heart of an academic, and at his arrival entertained all who came about him with such profusion, that the professors were lured by the smell of his table from their books, and flocked round him with all the cringes of awkward complaisance. This eagerness answered the merchant's purpose; he glutted them with delicacies, and softened them with caresses, till he prevailed upon one after another to open his bosom, and make a discovery of his competitions, jealousies, and resentments. Having thus learned each man's character, partly from himself, and partly from his acquaintances, he resolved to find some other education for his son, and went away convinced that a scholastic life has no other tendency than to vitiate the morals and contract the understanding, nor would he afterwards hear with patience the praises of the ancient authors, being persuaded that scholars of all ages must have been the same, and that Xenophon and Cicero were professors of some former university, and therefore mean and selfish, ignorant and servile, like those whom he had lately visited and forsaken.

Envy, curiosity, and a sense of the imperfection of our present state, incline us to estimate the advantages which are in the possession of others above their real value. Every one must have remarked, what powers and prerogatives the vulgar imagine to be conferred by learning. A man of science is expected to excel the unlettered and unenlightened even on occasions where literature is of no use, and, among weak minds, loses part of his reverence, by discovering no superiority in those parts of life in which all are unavoidably equal; as, when a monarch makes a progress to the remoter provinces, the rustics are said sometimes to wonder that they find him of the same size with themselves.

These demands of prejudice and folly can never be satisfied; and therefore many of the imputations which learning suffers from disappointed ignorance are without reproach. But there are some failures to which men of study are peculiarly exposed. Every condition has its disadvantages. The circle of knowledge is too wide for the most active and diligent intellect, and while science is pursued, other accomplishments are neglected; as a small garrison must leave one part of an extensive fortress naked when an alarm calls them to another.

The learned, however, might generally support their dignity with more success, if they suffered not themselves to be misled by the desire of superfluous attainments. Raphael, in return to Adam's inquiries into the courses of the stars and the revolutions of heaven, counsels him to withdraw his mind from idle speculations, and employ his faculties upon nearer and more interesting objects, the survey of his own life, the subjection of his passions, the knowledge of duties which must daily be performed, and the detection of dangers which must daily be incurred.

This angelic counsel every man of letters should always have before him. He that devotes himself to retired study naturally sinks from omission to forgetfulness of social duties; he must be therefore sometimes awakened and recalled to the general condition of mankind.

I am far from any intention to limit curiosity, or confine the labours of learning to arts of immediate and necessary use. It is only from the various essays of experimental industry, and the vague excursions of minds sent out upon discovery, that any advancement of knowledge can be expected; and though many must be disappointed in their labours, yet they are not to be

charged with having spent their time in vain; their example contributed to inspire emulation, and their miscarriages taught others the way to success.

But the distant hope of being one day useful or eminent, ought not to mislead us too far from that study which is equally requisite to the great and mean, to the celebrated and obscure; the art of moderating the desires, of repressing the appetites, and of conciliating or retaining the favour of mankind.

No man can imagine the course of his own life, or the conduct of the world around him, unworthy his attention; yet, among the sons of learning, many seem to have thought of every thing rather than of themselves, and to have observed every thing but what passes before their eyes: many who toil through the intricacy of complicated systems are insuperably embarrassed with the least perplexity in common affairs; many who compare the actions and ascertain the characters of ancient heroes, let their own days glide away without examination, and suffer vicious habits to encroach upon their minds without resistance or detection.

The most frequent reproach of the scholastic race is the want of fortitude, not martial but philosophic. Men bred in shades and silence, taught to immure themselves at sunset, and accustomed to no other weapon than syllogism, may be allowed to feel terror at personal danger, and to be disconcerted by tumult and alarm. But why should he whose life is spent in contemplation, and whose business is only to discover truth, be unable to rectify the fallacies of imagination, or contend successfully against prejudice and passion? To what end has he read and meditated, if he gives up his understanding to false appearances, and suffers himself to be enslaved by fear of evils to which only folly or vanity can expose him, or elated by advantages to which, as they are equally conferred upon the good and bad, no real dignity is annexed?

Such, however, is the state of the world, that the most obsequious of the slaves of pride, the most rapturous of the gazers upon wealth, the most officious of the whisperers of greatness, are collected from seminaries appropriated to the study of wisdom and of virtue, where it was intended that appetite should learn to be content with little, and that hope should aspire only to honours which no human power can give or take away.

The student, when he comes forth into the world, instead of congratulating himself upon his exemption from the errors of those whose opinions have been formed by accident or custom, and who live without any certain principles of conduct, is commonly in haste to mingle with the multitude, and show his sprightliness and ductility, by an expeditious compliance with fashions or vices. The first smile of a man, whose fortune gives him power to reward his dependents, commonly enchants him beyond resistance; the glare of equipage, the sweets of luxury, the liberality of general promises, the softness of habitual affability, fill his imagination; and he soon ceases to have any other wish than to be well received, or any measure of right and wrong but the opinion of his patron.

A man flattered and obeyed learns to exact grosser adulation and enjoin lower submission. Neither our virtues nor vices are all our own. If there were no cowardice, there would be little insolence; pride cannot rise to any great degree, but by the concurrence of blandishment or the sufferance of tameness. The wretch who would shrink and crouch before one that should dart his eyes upon him with the spirit of natural equality, becomes capricious and tyrannical when he sees himself approached with a downcast look, and hears the soft address of awe and servility. To those who are willing to purchase favour by cringes and compliance, is to be imputed the haughtiness that leaves nothing to be hoped by firmness and integrity.

If, instead of wandering after the meteors of philosophy, which fill the world with splendour for a while, and then sink and are forgotten, the candidates of learning fixed their eyes upon the permanent lustre of moral and religious truth, they would find a more certain direction to happiness. A little plausibility of discourse, and acquaintance with unnecessary speculations, is dearly purchased when it excludes those instructions which fortify the heart with resolution, and exalt the spirit to independence.

No. 181.] TUESDAY, DEC. 10, 1751.

—Neu fluitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ.—HOR.

Nor let me float in fortune's power,
Dependant on the future hour. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As I have passed much of my life in disquiet and suspense, and lost many opportunities of advantage by a passion which I have reason to believe prevalent in different degrees over a great part of mankind, I cannot but think myself well qualified to warn those who are yet uncaptivated, of the danger which they incur by placing themselves within its influence.

I served an apprenticeship to a linen-draper, with uncommon reputation for diligence and fidelity; and at the age of three-and-twenty opened a shop for myself with a large stock, and such credit among all the merchants who were acquainted with my master, that I could command whatever was imported curious and valuable. For five years I proceeded with success proportioned to close application and untainted integrity; was a daring bidder at every sale; always paid my notes before they were due; and advanced so fast in commercial reputation, that I was proverbially marked out as the model of young traders, and every one expected that a few years would make me an alderman.

In this course of even prosperity, I was one day persuaded to buy a ticket in the lottery. The sum was inconsiderable, part was to be repaid though fortune might fail to favour me, and therefore my established maxims of frugality did not restrain me from so trifling an experiment. The ticket lay almost forgotten till the time at which every man's fate was to be determined; nor did the affair even then seem of any importance, till I discovered by the public papers that the number next to mine had conferred the great prize.

My heart leaped at the thought of such an approach to sudden riches, which I considered myself, however contrarily to the laws of computation, as having missed by a single chance; and I could not forbear to revolve the consequences which such a bounteous allotment would have produced, if it had happened to me. This dream of felicity, by degrees, took possession of my imagination. The great delight of my solitary hours was to purchase an estate, and form plantations with money which once might have been mine, and I never met my friends but I spoiled all their merriment by perpetual complaints of my ill luck.

At length another lottery was opened, and I had now so heated my imagination with the prospect of a prize, that I should have pressed among the first purchasers, had not my ardour been withheld by deliberation upon the probability of success from one ticket rather than another. I hesitated long between even and odd; considered the square and cubic numbers through the lottery; examined all those to which good luck had been hitherto annexed; and at last fixed upon one, which, by some secret relation to the events of my life, I thought predestined to make me happy. Delay in great affairs is often mischievous; the ticket was sold, and its possessor could not be found.

I returned to my conjectures, and, after many arts of prognostication, fixed upon another chance, but with less confidence. Never did captive, heir, or lover, feel so much vexation from the slow pace of time, as I suffered between the purchase of my ticket and the distribution of the prizes. I solaced my uneasiness as well as I could, by frequent contemplations of approaching happiness; when the sun rose I knew it would set, and congratulated myself at night that I was so much nearer to my wishes. At last the day came, my ticket appeared, and rewarded all my care and sagacity with a despicable prize of fifty pounds.

My friends, who honestly rejoiced upon my success, were very coldly received; I hid myself a fortnight in the country, that my chagrin might fume away without observation, and then returning to my shop began to listen after another lottery.

With the news of a lottery I was soon gratified; and having now found the vanity of conjecture and inefficacy of computation, I resolved to take the prize by violence, and therefore bought forty tickets—not omitting, however, to divide them between the even and odd numbers, that I might not miss the lucky class. Many conclusions did I form, and many experiments did I try, to determine from which of those tickets I might most reasonably expect riches. At last, being unable to satisfy myself by any modes of reasoning, I wrote the numbers upon dice, and allotted five hours every day to the amusement of throwing them in a garret; and, examining the event by an exact register, found, on the evening before the lottery was drawn, that one of my numbers had been turned up five times more than any of the rest in three hundred and thirty thousand throws.

This experiment was fallacious; the first day presented the hopeful ticket, a detestable blank. The rest came out with different fortune, and in conclusion I lost thirty pounds by this great adventure.

I had now wholly changed the cast of my behaviour and the conduct of my life. The shop was for the most part abandoned to my servants; and if I entered it, my thoughts were so engrossed by my tickets that I scarcely heard or answered a question, but considered every customer as an intruder upon my meditations, whom I was in haste to despatch. I mistook the price of my goods, committed blunders in my bills, forgot to file my receipts, and neglected to regulate my books. My acquaintances by degrees began to fall away; but I perceived the decline of my business with little emotion, because whatever deficiency there might be in my gains I expected the next lottery to supply.

Miscarriage naturally produces diffidence; I began now to seek assistance against ill luck, by an alliance with those that had been more successful. I inquired diligently at what office any prize had been sold, that I might purchase of a more propitious vender; solicited those who had been fortunate in former lotteries, to partake with me in my new tickets; and whenever I met with one that had in any event of his life been eminently prosperous, I invited him to take a larger share. I had, by this rule of conduct, so diffused my interest, that I had a fourth of fifteen tickets, an eighth of forty, and a sixteenth of ninety.

I waited for the decision of my fate with my former palpitations, and looked upon the business of my trade with the usual neglect. The wheel at last was turned, and its revolutions brought me a long succession of sorrows and disappointments. I indeed often partook of a small prize, and the loss of one day was generally balanced by the gain of the next; but my desires yet remained unsatisfied, and when one of my chances had failed, all my expectation was suspended on those which remained yet undetermined. At last a prize of five thousand pounds was proclaimed; I caught fire at the cry, and, inquiring the number, found it to be one of my own tickets, which I had divided among those on whose luck I depended, and of which I had retained only a sixteenth part.

You will easily judge with what detestation of himself, a man thus intent upon gain reflected that he had sold a prize which was once in his possession. It was to no purpose that I represented to my mind the impossibility of recalling the past, or the folly of condemning an act, which only its event, an event which no human intelligence could foresee, proved to be wrong. The prize which, though put in my hands had been suffered to slip from me, filled me with anguish; and, knowing that complaint would only expose me to ridicule, I gave myself up silently to grief, and lost by degrees my appetite and my rest.

My indisposition soon became visible; I was visited by my friends, and among them by Eumathes, a clergyman, whose piety and learning gave him such an ascendant over me, that I could not refuse to open my heart. "There are," said he, "few minds sufficiently firm to be trusted in the hands of chance. Whoever finds himself inclined to anticipate futurity, and exalt possibility to certainty, should avoid every kind of casual adventure, since his grief must be always proportionate to his hope. You have long wasted

that time, which, by a proper application, would have certainly, though moderately, increased your fortune, in a laborious and anxious pursuit of a species of gain, which no labour or anxiety, no art or expedient, can secure or promote. You are now fretting away your life in repentance of an act, against which repentance can give no caution, but to avoid the occasion of committing it. Rouse from this lazy dream of fortuitous riches, which, if obtained, you could scarcely have enjoyed, because they could confer no consciousness of desert; return to rational and manly industry, and consider the mere gift of luck as below the care of a wise man."

No. 182.] SATURDAY, DEC. 14, 1751.

——Dives qui fieri vult
Et cito vult fieri. JUVENAL.

The lust of wealth can never bear delay.

IT has been observed in a late paper, that we are unreasonably desirous to separate the goods of life from those evils which Providence has connected with them, and to catch advantages without paying the price at which they are offered us. Every man wishes to be rich, but very few have the powers necessary to raise a sudden fortune, either by new discoveries, or by superiority of skill, in any necessary employment; and, among lower understandings, many want the firmness and industry requisite to regular gain and gradual acquisitions.

From the hope of enjoying affluence by methods more compendious than those of labour, and more generally practicable than those of genius, proceeds the common inclination to experiment and hazard, and that willingness to snatch all opportunities of growing rich by chance, which, when it has once taken possession of the mind, is seldom driven out either by time or argument, but continues to waste life in perpetual delusion, and generally ends in wretchedness and want.

The folly of untimely exultation and visionary prosperity is by no means peculiar to the purchasers of tickets; there are multitudes whose life is nothing but a continual lottery; who are always within a few months of plenty and happiness, and, how often soever they are mocked with blanks, expect a prize from the next adventure.

Among the most resolute and ardent of the votaries of chance, may be numbered the mortals whose hope is to raise themselves by a wealthy match; who lay out all their industry on the assiduities of courtship, and sleep and wake with no other ideas than of treats, compliments, guardians and rivals.

One of the most indefatigable of this class is my old friend Leviculus, whom I have never known for thirty years without some matrimonial project of advantage. Leviculus was bred under a merchant, and by the graces of his person, the sprightliness of his prattle, and the neatness of his dress, so much enamoured his master's second daughter, a girl of sixteen, that she declared her resolution to have no other husband. Her father, after having chidden her for unduti-fulness, consented to the match, not much to the satisfaction of Leviculus, who was sufficiently elated with his conquest to think himself entitled to a larger fortune. He was, however, soon rid of his perplexity, for his mistress died before their marriage.

He was now so well satisfied with his own accomplishments, that he determined to commence fortune-hunter; and when his apprenticeship expired, instead of beginning, as was expected, to walk the exchange with a face of importance, or associating himself with those who were most eminent for their knowledge of the stocks, he at once threw off the solemnity of the counting-house, equipped himself with a modish wig, listened to wits in coffee-houses, passed his evenings behind the scenes in the theatres, learned the names of the beauties of quality, hummed the last stanzas of fashionable songs, talked with familiarity of high play, boasted of his achievements upon drawers and coachmen, was often brought to his lodgings at midnight in a chair, told with negligence and jocularity of bilking a tailor, and now and then let fly a shrewd jest at a sober citizen.

Thus furnished with irresistible artillery, he turned his batteries upon the female world, and in the first warmth of self-approbation, proposed no less than the possession of riches and beauty united. He therefore paid his civilities to Flavilla, the only daughter of a wealthy shopkeeper, who not being accustomed to amorous blandishments, or respectful addresses, was delighted with the novelty of love, and easily suffered him to conduct her to the play, and to meet her where she visited. Leviculus did not doubt but her father, however offended by a clandestine marriage, would soon be reconciled by the tears of his daughter, and the merit of his son-in-law, and was in haste to conclude the affair. But the lady liked better to be courted than married, and kept him three years in uncertainty and attendance. At last she fell in love with a young ensign at a ball, and, having danced with him all night, married him in the morning.

Leviculus, to avoid the ridicule of his companions, took a journey to a small estate in the country, where, after his usual inquiries concerning the nymphs in the neighbourhood, he found it proper to fall in love with Altilla, a maiden lady, twenty years older than himself, for whose favour fifteen nephews and nieces were in perpetual contention. They hovered round her with such jealous officiousness, as scarcely left a moment vacant for a lover. Leviculus, nevertheless, discovered his passion in a letter, and Altilla could not withstand the pleasure of hearing vows and sighs, and flatteries and protestations. She admitted his visits, enjoyed, for five years, the happiness of keeping all her expectants in perpetual alarms, and amused herself with the various stratagems which were practised to disengage her affections. Sometimes she was advised with great earnestness to travel for her health, and sometimes entreated to keep her brother's house. Many stories were spread to the disadvantage of Leviculus, by which she commonly seemed affected for a time, but took care soon afterwards to express her conviction of their falsehood. But being at last satiated with this ludicrous tyranny, she told her lover, when he pressed for the re-

ward of his services, that she was very sensible of his merit, but was resolved not to impoverish an ancient family.

He then returned to the town, and soon after his arrival became acquainted with Latronia, a lady distinguished by the elegance of her equipage and the regularity of her conduct. Her wealth was evident in her magnificence, and her prudence in her economy; and therefore Leviculus, who had scarcely confidence to solicit her favour, readily acquitted fortune of her former debts, when he found himself distinguished by her with such marks of preference as a woman of modesty is allowed to give. He now grew bolder, and ventured to breathe out his impatience before her. She heard him without resentment, in time permitted him to hope for happiness, and at last fixed the nuptial day, without any distrustful reserve of pin-money, or sordid stipulations for jointure and settlements.

Leviculus was triumphing on the eve of marriage, when he heard on the stairs the voice of Latronia's maid, whom frequent bribes had secured in his service. She soon burst into his room, and told him that she could not suffer him to be longer deceived; that her mistress was now spending the last payment of her fortune, and was only supported in her expense by the credit of his estate. Leviculus shuddered to see himself so near a precipice, and found that he was indebted for his escape to the resentment of the maid, who, having assisted Latronia to gain the conquest, quarrelled with her at last about the plunder.

Leviculus was now hopeless and disconsolate, till one Sunday he saw a lady in the Mall, whom her dress declared a widow, and whom, by the jolting prance of her gait, and the broad resplendance of her countenance, he guessed to have lately buried some prosperous citizen. He followed her home, and found her to be no less than the relic of Prune the grocer, who, having no children, had bequeathed to her all his debts and dues, and his estates real and personal. No formality was necessary in addressing madame Prune, and therefore Leviculus went next morning without an introductor. His declaration was received with a loud laugh; she then collected her countenance, wondered at his impudence, asked him if he knew to whom he was talking, then showed him the door, and again laughed to find him confused. Leviculus discovered that this coarseness was nothing more than the coquetry of Cornhill, and next day returned to the attack. He soon grew familiar to her dialect, and in a few weeks heard, without any emotion, hints of gay clothes with empty pockets; concurred in many sage remarks on the regard due to people of property; and agreed with her in detestation of the ladies at the other end of the town, who pinched their bellies to buy fine laces, and then pretended to laugh at the city.

He sometimes presumed to mention marriage; but was always answered with a slap, a hoot, and a flounce. At last he began to press her closer, and thought himself more favourably received; but going one morning, with a resolution to trifle no longer, he found her gone to church with a young journeyman from the neighbouring shop, of whom she had become enamoured at her window.

In these, and a thousand intermediate adventures, has Leviculus spent his time, till he is now grown gray with age, fatigue, and disappointment. He begins at last to find that success is not to be expected; and being unfit for any employment that might improve his fortune, and unfurnished with any arts that might amuse his leisure, is condemned to wear out a tasteless life in narratives which few will hear, and complaints which none will pity.

No. 183.] Tuesday, Dec. 17, 1751.

Nullo fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erat. LUCAN

No faith of partnership dominion owns;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

The hostility perpetually exercised between one man and another, is caused by the desire of many for that which only few can possess. Every man would be rich, powerful, and famous: yet fame, power, and riches, are only the names of relative conditions, which imply the obscurity of dependance, and poverty of greater numbers.

This universal and incessant competition produces injury and malice by two motives, interest and envy; the prospect of adding to our possessions what we can take from others, and the hope of alleviating the sense of our disparity by lessening others, though we gain nothing to ourselves.

Of these two malignant and destructive powers, it seems probable, at the first view, that interest has the strongest and most extensive influence. It is easy to conceive that opportunities to seize what has been long wanted, may excite desires almost irresistible; but surely the same eagerness cannot be kindled by an accidental power of destroying that which gives happiness to another. It must be more natural to rob for gain, than to ravage only for mischief.

Yet I am inclined to believe, that the great law of mutual benevolence is oftener violated by envy than by interest; and that most of the misery which the defamation of blameless actions, or the obstruction of honest endeavours, brings upon the world, is inflicted by men that propose no advantage to themselves but the satisfaction of poisoning the banquet which they cannot taste, and blasting the harvest which they have no right to reap.

Interest can diffuse itself but to a narrow compass. The number is never large of those who can hope to fill the posts of degraded power, catch the fragments of shattered fortune, or succeed to the honours of depreciated beauty. But the empire of envy has no limits, as it requires to its influence very little help from external circumstances. Envy may always be produced by idleness and pride, and in what place will they not be found.

Interest requires some qualities not universally bestowed. The ruin of another will produce no profit to him who has not discernment to mark his advantage, courage to seize, and activity to pursue it; but the cold malignity of envy may be exerted in a torpid and quiescent state, amidst the gloom of stupidity, in the coverts of cowardice. He that falls by the attacks of interest, is torn by hungry tigers; he may discover and resist his enemies. He that perishes in the am-

bushes of envy, is destroyed by unknown and invisible assailants, and dies like a man suffocated by a poisonous vapour, without knowledge of his danger, or possibility of contest.

Interest is seldom pursued but at some hazard. He that hopes to gain much, has commonly something to lose, and, when he ventures to attack superiority, if he fails to conquer, is irrevocably crushed. But envy may act without expense or danger. To spread suspicion, to invent calumnies, to propagate scandal, requires neither labour nor courage. It is easy for the author of a lie, however malignant, to escape detection, and infamy needs very little industry to assist its circulation.

Envy is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times and in every place: the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation; its effects therefore are every where discoverable, and its attempts always to be dreaded.

It is impossible to mention a name which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out, The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from public affairs, will never want those who hint, with Shylock, that ships are but boards. The beauty adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain or instruct, yet suffers persecution from innumerable critics, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, and of hearing applauses which another enjoys.

The frequency of envy makes it so familiar, that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice but by attempting to excel, finds himself pursued by multitudes whom he never saw, with all the implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let loose upon him as a public enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation; when he hears the misfortunes of his family, or the follies of his youth, exposed to the world; and every failure of conduct, or defect of nature, aggravated and ridiculed; he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations, which, if carefully implanted, and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and repress it, since no one can nurse it for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is above all other vices inconsistent with the character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour gains as much as he takes away, and may improve his own condition in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided that dangerous and empirical morality, which cures one vice by means of another. But envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is one of those lawless enemies of society, against which poisoned arrows may honestly be used. Let it therefore be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride who have lost their virtue.

It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy incites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is often marked out for ruin, not because he has failed in any duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required.

Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love, if it had been well employed; but envy is mere unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity, but only that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns him, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

No. 184.] SATURDAY, DEC. 21, 1751.

Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris JUV

Intrust thy fortune to the powers above;
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.
DRYDEN

As every scheme of life, so every form of writing, has its advantages and inconveniences, though not mingled in the same proportions. The writer of essays escapes many embarrassments to which a large work would have exposed him; he seldom harasses his reason with long trains of consequences, dims his eyes with the perusal of antiquated volumes, or burdens his memory with great accumulations of preparatory knowledge. A careless glance upon a favourite author, or transient survey of the varieties of life, is sufficient to supply the first hint or seminal idea, which, enlarged by the gradual accretion of matter stored in the mind, is, by the warmth of fancy, easily expanded into flowers, and sometimes ripened into fruit.

The most frequent difficulty by which the authors of these petty compositions are distressed, arises from the perpetual demand of novelty and change. The compiler of a system of science lays his invention at rest, and employs only his judgment, the faculty exerted with less fatigue. Even the relater of feigned adventures, when once the principal characters are established, and the great events regularly connected, finds incidents and episodes crowding upon his mind; every change opens new views, and the latter part of the story grows without labour out of the former. But he that attempts to entertain his reader with unconnected pieces, finds the irksomeness of his task rather increased than lessened by every production. The day calls afresh

upon him for a new topic, and he is again obliged to choose, without any principle to regulate his choice.

It is indeed true, that there is seldom any necessity of looking far, or inquiring long, for a proper subject. Every diversity of art or nature, every public blessing or calamity, every domestic pain or gratification, every sally of caprice, blunder of absurdity, or stratagem of affection, may supply matter to him whose only rule is to avoid uniformity. But it often happens, that the judgment is distracted with boundless multiplicity, the imagination ranges from one design to another, and the hours pass imperceptibly away, till the composition can be no longer delayed, and necessity enforces the use of those thoughts which then happen to be at hand. The mind, rejoicing at deliverance on any terms from perplexity and suspense, applies herself vigorously to the work before her, collects embellishments and illustrations, and sometimes finishes, with great elegance and happiness, what in a state of ease and leisure she never had begun.

It is not commonly observed, how much, even of actions considered as particularly subject to choice, is to be attributed to accident, or some cause out of our own power, by whatever name it be distinguished. To close tedious deliberations with hasty resolves, and after long consultations with reason to refer the question to caprice, is by no means peculiar to the essayist. Let him that peruses this paper review the series of his life, and inquire how he was placed in his present condition. He will find that, of the good or ill which he has experienced, a great part came unexpected, without any visible gradations of approach; that every event has been influenced by causes acting without his intervention; and that, whenever he pretended to the prerogative of foresight, he was mortified with new conviction of the shortness of his views.

The busy, the ambitious, the inconstant, and the adventurous, may be said to throw themselves by design into the arms of fortune, and voluntarily to quit the power of governing themselves; they engage in a course of life in which little can be ascertained by previous measures; nor is it any wonder that their time is passed between elation and despondency, hope and disappointment.

Some there are who appear to walk the road of life with more circumspection, and make no step till they think themselves secure from the hazard of a precipice; when, neither pleasure nor profit can tempt them from the beaten path; who refuse to climb lest they should fall, or to run lest they should stumble; and move slowly forward, without any compliance with those passions by which the heady and vehement are seduced and betrayed.

Yet even the timorous prudence of this judicious class is far from exempting them from the dominion of chance, a subtle and insidious power, who will intrude upon privacy and embarrass caution. No course of life is so prescribed and limited, but that many actions must result from arbitrary election. Every one must form the general plan of his conduct by his own reflections; he must resolve whether he will endeavour at riches or at content; whether he will exercise private or public virtues, whether he will labour for the general benefit of mankind, or contract his beneficence to his family and dependants.

This question has long exercised the schools of philosophy, but remains yet undecided; and what hope is there that a young man, unacquainted with the arguments on either side, should determine his own destiny otherwise than by chance? When chance has given him a partner of his bed, whom he prefers to all other women, without any proof of superior desert, chance must again direct him in the education of his children; for, who was ever able to convince himself by arguments, that he had chosen for his son that mode of instruction to which his understanding was best adapted, or by which he would most easily be made wise or virtuous?

Whoever shall inquire by what motives he was determined on these important occasions, will find them such as his pride will scarcely suffer him to confess; some sudden ardour of desire, some uncertain glimpse of advantage, some petty competition, some inaccurate conclusion, or some example implicitly reverenced. Such are often the first causes of our resolves; for it is necessary to act, but impossible to know the consequences of action, or to discuss all the reasons which offer themselves on every part to inquisitiveness and solicitude.

Since life itself is uncertain, nothing which has life for its basis can boast much stability. Yet this is but a small part of our perplexity. We set out on a tempestuous sea in quest of some port, where we expect to find rest, but where we are not sure of admission; we are not only in danger of sinking in the way, but of being misled by meteors mistaken for stars, of being driven from our course by the changes of the wind, and of losing it by unskilful steerage; yet it sometimes happens, that cross winds blow us to a safer coast, that meteors draw us aside from whirlpools, and that negligence or error contributes to our escape from mischiefs to which a direct course would have exposed us. Of those that, by precipitate conclusions, involve themselves in calamities without guilt, very few, however they may reproach themselves, can be certain that other measures would have been more successful.

In this state of universal uncertainty, where a thousand dangers hover about us, and none can tell whether the good that he pursues is not evil in disguise, or whether the next step will lead him to safety or destruction, nothing can afford any rational tranquillity, but the conviction that however we amuse ourselves with unideal sounds, nothing in reality is governed by chance, but that the universe is under the perpetual superintendence of him who created it; that our being is in the hands of omnipotent goodness, by whom what appears casual to us, is directed for ends ultimately kind and merciful; and that nothing can finally hurt him who debars not himself from the Divine favour.

No. 185.] TUESDAY, DEC. 24, 1751.

At vindicta bonum vita jucundius ipsa,
Nempe hoc indocti.——
Chrysippus non dicit idem, nec mite Thaletis
Ingenium, dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ saeva inter vincla cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare.—— Quippe minuti
Semper et infirmi est animi, exiguique voluptas
Ultio. JUV

But O! revenge is sweet.
Thus think the crowd; who, eager to engage,
Take quickly fire, and kindle into rage.
Not so mild Thales, nor Chrysippus thought,
Nor that good man, who drank the poisonous draught
With mind serene, and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates' divinely brave!
Injured he fell, and dying he forgave;
Too noble for revenge; which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind. DRYDEN.

No vicious dispositions of the mind more obstinately resist both the counsels of philosophy and the injunctions of religion, than those which are complicated with an opinion of dignity; and which we cannot dismiss without leaving in the hands of opposition some advantage iniquitously obtained, or suffering from our own prejudices some imputation of pusillanimity.

For this reason, scarcely any law of our Redeemer is more openly transgressed, or more industriously evaded, than that by which he commands his followers to forgive injuries, and prohibits, under the sanction of eternal misery, the gratification of the desire which every man feels to return pain upon him that inflicts it. Many who could have conquered their anger, are unable to combat pride, and pursue offences to extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.

But certainly no precept could better become him, at whose birth *peace* was proclaimed *to the earth*. For, what would so soon destroy all the order of society, and deform life with violence and ravage, as a permission to every one to judge his own cause, and to apportion his own recompense for imagined injuries.

It is difficult for a man of the strictest justice not to favour himself too much, in the calmest moments of solitary meditation. Every one wishes for the distinctions for which thousands are wishing at the same time, in their own opinion, with better claims. He that, when his reason operates in its full force, can thus, by the mere prevalence of self-love, prefer himself to his fellow-beings, is very unlikely to judge equitably when his passions are agitated by a sense of wrong, and his attention wholly engrossed by pain, interest, or danger. Whoever arrogates to himself the right of vengeance, shows how little he is qualified to decide his own claims, since he certainly demands what he would think unfit to be granted to another.

Nothing is more apparent, than that, however injured or however provoked, some must at last be contented to forgive. For, it can never be hoped that he who first commits an injury will contentedly acquiesce in the penalty required: the same haughtiness of contempt and vehemence of desire, that prompt the act of injustice, will more strongly incite its justification; and resentment can never so exactly balance the punishment with the fault, but there will remain an overplus of vengeance, which even he who condemns his first action will think himself entitled to retaliate. What then can ensue but a continual exacerbation of hatred, an unextinguishable feud, an incessant reciprocation of mischief, a mutual vigilance to entrap, and eagerness to destroy?

Since then the imaginary right of vengeance must be at last remitted, because it is impossible to live in perpetual hostility and equally impossible that of two enemies, either should first think himself obliged by justice to submission, it is surely eligible to forgive early. Every passion is more easily subdued before it has been long accustomed to possession of the heart; every idea is obliterated with less difficulty, as it has been more slightly impressed, and less frequently renewed. He who has often brooded over his wrongs, pleased himself with schemes of malignity, and glutted his pride with the fancied supplications of humbled enmity, will not easily open his bosom to amity and reconciliation, or indulge the gentle sentiments of benevolence and peace.

It is easiest to forgive while there is yet little to be forgiven. A single injury may be soon dismissed from the memory; but a long succession of ill offices by degrees associates itself with every idea; a long contest involves so many circumstances, that every place and action will recall it to the mind; and fresh remembrance of vexation must still enkindle rage, and irritate revenge.

A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain. He that willingly suffers the corrosions of inveterate hatred, and gives up his days and nights to the gloom of malice and perturbations of stratagem, cannot surely be said to consult his ease. Resentment is a union of sorrow with malignity, a combination of a passion which all endeavour to avoid, with a passion which all concur to detest. The man who retires to meditate mischief, and to exasperate his own rage; whose thoughts are employed only on means of distress and contrivances of ruin; whose mind never pauses from the remembrance of his own sufferings, but to indulge some hope of enjoying the calamities of another, may justly be numbered among the most miserable of human beings, among those who are guilty without reward, who have neither the gladness of prosperity, nor the calm of innocence.

Whoever considers the weakness both of himself and others, will not long want persuasives to forgiveness. We know not to what degree of malignity any injury is to be imputed; or how much its guilt, if we were to inspect the mind of him that committed it, would be extenuated by mistake, precipitance, or negligence: we cannot be certain how much more we feel than was intended to be inflicted, or how much we increase the mischief to ourselves by voluntary aggravations. We may charge to design the effects of accident; we may think the blow violent, only because we have made ourselves delicate and tender; we are on every side in danger of error and of guilt; which we are certain to avoid only by speedy forgiveness.

From this pacific and harmless temper, thus propitious to others and ourselves, to domestic tranquillity and to social happiness, no man is withheld but by pride, by the fear of being insulted by his adversary, or despised by the world.

It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that "all pride is abject and mean." It is always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants.

Nothing can be great which is not right. Nothing which reason condemns can be suitable to the dignity of the human mind. To be driven by external motives from the path which our own heart approves; to give way to any thing but conviction; to suffer the opinion of others to rule our choice, or overpower our resolves; is to submit tamely to the lowest and most ignominious slavery, and to resign the right of directing our own lives.

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive, is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue, without regard to present dangers or advantage; a continual reference of every action to the Divine will; an habitual appeal to everlasting justice; and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to the reward which perseverance only can obtain. But that pride which many, who presume to boast of generous sentiments, allow to regulate their measures, has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men; of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assiduity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

He that can descend to bribe suffrages like these, at the price of his innocence; he that can suffer the delight of such acclamations to withhold his attention from the commands of the universal Sovereign, has little reason to congratulate himself upon the greatness of his mind: whenever he awakes to seriousness and reflection, he must become despicable in his own eyes, and shrink with shame from the remembrance of his cowardice and folly.

Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity is suspended: and to him that refuses to practise it, the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the Saviour of the world has been born in vain.

No. 186.] SATURDAY, DEC. 28, 1751.

Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura——
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem. HOR.

Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year;
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles.
FRANCIS.

OF the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity, and, while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies, in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry; yet, however, from that time, was observed rarely to appear but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress, and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait, that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested that "she was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern cannibals; that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amarock, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa." He concluded with a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut might be buried without his bow, and that, in the land of souls, his skull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments: but Ajut, with the natural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship: and before she would confess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice broke, and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; he attacked the sea-horses on the ice, pursued the seals into the water, and leaped upon the back of the whale while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor was his diligence less to accumulate all that could be necessary to make winter comfortable; he dried the roe of fishes and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut, that she would at last grant him her hand, and accompany him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as a trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. "O virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider," said Anningait. "what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs! Then must the night be passed without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries which lying strangers so wantonly describe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground, dwell together from year to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways enclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer, we have no means of crossing the mountains, whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut, a few summer days, and a few winter nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gayety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?"

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

No. 187.] TUESDAY, DEC. 31, 1751.

Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,
Nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosæ——
Omnia vincit amor. VIRGIL.

Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not though beneath the Thracian clime we freeze,
Or the mild bliss of temperate skies forego,
And in mid winter tread Sithonian snow:——
Love conquers all.—— DRYDEN.

ANNINGAIT, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore presented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the sea-side; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood awhile to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside, from that hour, her white deer-skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forebore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture: and, while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed, "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the rein-deer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women; for a man will not debase himself by work which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the

water, and swim back to his mistress; but recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers and uncouth images his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "O life!" says he, "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure, but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes for ever! What, love, art thou, but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? Why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet? Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subduc the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and the hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief, and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chase and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk, on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in childbirth, and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men's and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover, and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated angekkok of that part of the country, and by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise that, when Ajut should consult him, he would declare that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her; with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk, depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but, finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but, finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

At last she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed, stealing slow and heavy laden along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land, they informed her, that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing-boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her: but when at last they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where, finding a fishing-boat, she entered it without hesitation, and telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks; and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

No. 188.] SATURDAY, JAN. 4, 1752.

——*Si te colo, Sexte, non amabo.* MART.

The more I honour thee, the less I love.

NONE of the desires dictated by vanity is more general, or less blameable, than that of being

distinguished for the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that the defect can often be remarked; but as no man can live, otherwise than in a hermitage, without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of forcing attention wherever they come, whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented like the recess of the sun from northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy, or inspirits gayety.

It is apparent, that to excellence in this valuable art, some peculiar qualifications are necessary; for every one's experience will inform him, that the pleasure which men are able to give in conversation, holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and the parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place; we have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion, whom we knew to be too ignorant for a counsellor and too treacherous for a friend.

I question whether some abatement of character is not necessary to general acceptance. Few spend their time with much satisfaction under the eye of incontestable superiority; and, therefore, among those whose presence is courted at assemblies of jollity, there are seldom found men eminently distinguished for powers or acquisitions. The wit, whose vivacity condemns slower tongues to silence; the scholar, whose knowledge allows no man to fancy that he instructs him; the critic, who suffers no fallacy to pass undetected; and the reasoner, who condemns the idle to thought and the negligent to attention, are generally praised and feared, reverenced and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment, extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of the face without gladness of heart.

For this reason, no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to contemporary history; for almost every man has some real or imaginary connexion with a celebrated character; some desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place, qualifies himself to become a speaker in another; for though he cannot comprehend a series of argument, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, he yet thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and pleases his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are for the most part heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths, may happen to one man as well as to another; and to relate them when they are known, has in appearance so little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

But it is not easy, and in some situations of life not possible, to accumulate such a stock of materials as may support the expense of continual narration; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this method of ingratiating themselves, please only at the first interview; and, for want of new supplies of intelligence, wear out their stories by continual repetition.

There would be, therefore, little hope of obtaining the praise of a good companion, were it not to be gained by more compendious methods; but such is the kindness of mankind to all, except those who aspire to real merit and rational dignity, that every understanding may find some way to excite benevolence; and whoever is not envied may learn the art of procuring love. We are willing to be pleased, but are not willing to admire: we favour the mirth or officiousness that solicits our regard, but oppose the worth or spirit that enforces it.

The first place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the *merry fellow*, whose laugh is loud, and whose voice is strong; who is ready to echo every jest with obstreperous approbation, and countenance every frolic with vociferations of applause. It is not necessary to a merry fellow to have in himself any fund of jocularity, or force of conception: it is sufficient that he always appears in the highest exaltation of gladness; for the greater part of mankind are gay or serious by infection, and follow without resistance the attraction of example.

Next to the merry fellow is the *good-natured man*, a being generally without benevolence, or any other virtue than such as indolence and insensibility confer. The characteristic of a good-natured man is to bear a joke; to sit unmoved and unaffected amidst noise and turbulence, profaneness and obscenity; to hear every tale without contradiction; to endure insult without reply; and to follow the stream of folly, whatever course it shall happen to take. The good-natured man is commonly the darling of the petty wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the rudiments of raillery; for he never takes advantage of failings, nor disconcerts a puny satirist with unexpected sarcasms; but, while the glass continues to circulate, contentedly bears the expense of uninterrupted laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own importance.

The *modest man* is a companion of a yet lower rank, whose only power of giving pleasure is not to interrupt it. The modest man satisfies himself with peaceful silence, which all his companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding not from inability to speak, but willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general character of excellence, have some single art of entertainment which serves them as a passport through the world. One I have known for fifteen years the darling of a weekly club, because every night, precisely at eleven, he begins

his favourite song, and during the vocal performance, by corresponding motions of his hand, chalks out a giant upon the wall. Another has endeared himself to a long succession of acquaintances by sitting among them with his wig reversed; another, by contriving to smut the nose of any stranger, who was to be initiated in the club; another, by purring like a cat, and then pretending to be frighted; and another, by yelping like a hound, and calling to the drawers to drive out the dog.

Such are the arts by which cheerfulness is promoted, and sometimes friendship established; arts, which those who despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the expense of innocence; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

No. 189.] Tuesday, Jan. 7, 1752.

Quod tam grande sophos clamat tibi turba togata.
Non tu, Pomponi, cœna diserta tua est. MART.

Resounding plaudits through the crowd have rung;
Thy treat is eloquent, and not thy tongue.
F. LEWIS.

The world scarcely affords opportunities of making any observation more frequently than on false claims to commendation. Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep; so that scarcely can two persons casually meet, but one is offended or diverted by the ostentation of the other.

Of these pretenders it is fit to distinguish those who endeavour to deceive from them who are deceived; those who by designed impostures promote their interest, or gratify their pride, from them who mean only to force into regard their latent excellences and neglected virtues; who believe themselves qualified to instruct or please, and therefore invite the notice of mankind.

The artful and fraudulent usurpers of distinction deserve greater severities than ridicule and contempt, since they are seldom content with empty praise, but are instigated by passions more pernicious than vanity. They consider the reputation which they endeavour to establish, as necessary to the accomplishment of some subsequent design, and value praise only as it may conduce to the success of avarice or ambition.

The commercial world is very frequently put into confusion by the bankruptcy of merchants, that assumed the splendour of wealth only to obtain the privilege of trading with the stock of other men, and of contracting debts which nothing but lucky casualties could enable them to pay; till, after having supported their appearance awhile by a tumultuary magnificence of boundless traffic, they sink at once, and drag down into poverty those whom their equipages had induced to trust them.

Among wretches that place their happiness in the favour of the great, of beings whom only high titles or large estates set above themselves, nothing is more common than to boast of confidence which they do not enjoy; to sell promises which they know their interest unable to perform; and to reimburse the tribute which they pay to an imperious master, from the contributions of meaner dependants, whom they can amuse with tales of their influence, and hopes of their solicitation.

Even among some, too thoughtless and volatile for avarice or ambition, may be found a species of falsehood more detestable than the levee or exchange can show. There are men that boast of debaucheries, of which they never had address to be guilty: ruin, by lewd tales, the characters of women to whom they are scarcely known, or by whom they have been rejected; destroy, in a drunken frolic, the happiness of families, blast the bloom of beauty, and intercept the reward of virtue.

Other artifices of falsehood, though utterly unworthy of an ingenious mind, are not yet to be ranked with flagitious enormities, nor is it necessary to incite sanguinary justice against them, since they may be adequately punished by detection and laughter. The traveller who describes cities which he has never seen; the squire who, at his return from London, tells of his intimacy with nobles to whom he has only bowed in the park or coffee-house; the author who entertains his admirers with stories of the assistance which he gives to wits of a higher rank; the city dame who talks of her visit at great houses, where she happens to know the cook-maid, are surely such harmless animals as truth herself may be content to despise without desiring to hurt them.

But of the multitudes who struggle in vain for distinction, and display their own merits only to feel more acutely the sting of neglect, a great part are wholly innocent of deceit, and are betrayed by infatuation and credulity, to that scorn with which the universal love of praise incites us all to drive feeble competitors out of our way.

Few men survey themselves with so much severity as not to admit prejudices in their own favour, which an artful flatterer may gradually strengthen, till wishes for a particular qualification are improved to hopes of attainment, and hopes of attainment to belief of possession. Such flatterers every one will find, who has power to reward their assiduities. Wherever there is wealth there will be dependance and expectation, and wherever there is dependance there will be an emulation of servility.

Many of the follies which provoke general censure, are the effects of such vanity as however it might have wantoned in the imagination, would scarcely have dared the public eye, had it not been animated and emboldened by flattery. Whatever difficulty there may be in the knowledge of ourselves, scarcely any one fails to suspect his own imperfections, till he is elevated by others to confidence. We are almost all naturally modest and timorous; but fear and shame are uneasy sensations, and whosoever helps to remove them is received with kindness.

Turpicula was the heiress of a large estate, and, having lost her mother in her infancy, was committed to her governess, whom misfortunes had reduced to suppleness and humility. The fondness of Turpicula's father would not suffer him to trust her at a public school; but he hired domestic teachers, and bestowed on her all the accomplishments that wealth could purchase. But how many things are necessary to happiness which money cannot obtain! Thus secluded from all with whom she might converse on terms of equality, she heard none of those intimations

of her defects, which envy, petulance, or anger, produce among children, where they are not afraid of telling what they think.

Turpicula saw nothing but obsequiousness, and heard nothing but commendations. None are so little acquainted with the heart, as not to know that woman's first wish is to be handsome, and that consequently the readiest method of obtaining her kindness is to praise her beauty. Turpicula had a distorted shape and a dark complexion; yet when the impudence of adulation had ventured to tell her of the commanding dignity of her motion, and the soft enchantment of her smile, she was easily convinced that she was the delight or torment of every eye, and that all who gazed upon her felt the fire of envy or love. She therefore neglected the culture of an understanding which might have supplied the defects of her form, and applied all her care to the decoration of her person; for she considered that more could judge of beauty than of wit, and was, like the rest of human beings, in haste to be admired. The desire of conquest naturally led her to the lists in which beauty signalizes her power. She glittered at court, fluttered in the park, and talked loud in the front box; but after a thousand experiments of her charms, was at last convinced that she had been flattered, and that her glass was honester than her maid.

No. 190.] SATURDAY, JAN. 11, 1752.

Ploravere suis, non respondere favorem
Quæsitum meritis. HOR.

Henry and Alfred ———
Closed their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind. POPE.

AMONG the emirs and visiers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne to assist the counsels or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad the son of Hanuth. Morad, having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pinnacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperor called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches, and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian ocean, every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity; every day increased his wealth, and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets; their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures; and only a few, whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domestics, for a time, redoubled their assiduities; but finding that no officiousness could sooth, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth, and he that once commanded nations often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state, he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son Abouzaid from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account of his father's sickness, and hasted by long journeys to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son; then commanding him to sit down at his bed side, "Abouzaid," says he, "thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth; the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience, let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous, thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers; but my inheritance the clemency of the emperor has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes round thee; whatever thou beholdest will, in a few hours, be thine; apply thine ear to my dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honours, enter not the palaces of kings; thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content thyself with private dignity, diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to be at rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power, I said to Defamation, Who will hear thee? and to Artifice, What canst thou perform? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest; remember that venom supplies the want of strength, and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered, that domestic happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or

hurt, as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who, being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants; the servant immediately confessed that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was intrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependent could not easily be made a friend; and that, while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to indulge his own caprice, and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations, and difference of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form in solitude some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and from that hour continued blind to colours, and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet," said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments: I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good, and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being, whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

No. 191.] TUESDAY, JAN. 14, 1752.

Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper. HOR.

The youth———
Yielding like wax, th' impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR MR. RAMBLER,

I HAVE been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behindhand; and the doctor tells my mamma, that if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks. But, dear Mr. Rambler, how can I help it? At this very time Melissa is dancing with the prettiest gentleman;—she will breakfast with him to-morrow, and then run to two auctions, and hear compliments, and have presents; then she will be drest, and visit, and get a ticket to the play; then go to cards, and win, and come home with two flambeaux before her chair. Dear Mr. Rambler, who can bear it?

My aunt has just brought me a bundle of your papers for my amusement. She says, you are a philosopher, and will teach me to moderate my desires, and look upon the world with indifference. But, dear Sir, I do not wish nor intend to moderate my desires, nor can I think it proper to look upon the world with indifference, till the world looks with indifference on me. I have been forced, however, to sit this morning a whole quarter of an hour with your paper before my face; but just as my aunt came in, Phyllida had brought me a letter from Mr. Trip, which I put within the leaves; and read about *absence* and *inconsolableness*, and *ardour*, and *irresistible passion*, and *eternal constancy*, while my aunt imagined that I was puzzling myself with your philosophy, and often cried out, when she saw me look confused, "If there is any word which you do not understand, child, I will explain."

Dear soul! how old people that think themselves wise may be imposed upon! But it is fit that they should take their turn; for I am sure, while they can keep poor girls close in the nursery, they tyrannize over us in a very shameful manner, and fill our imaginations with tales of terror, only to make us live in quiet subjection, and fancy that we can never be safe but by their protection.

I have a mamma and two aunts, who have all been formerly celebrated for wit and beauty, and are still generally admired by those who value themselves upon their understanding, and love to talk of vice and virtue, nature and simplicity, and beauty and propriety; but if there was not some hope of meeting me, scarcely a creature would come near them that wears a fashionable coat. These ladies, Mr. Rambler, have had me under their government fifteen years and a half, and have all that time been endeavouring to deceive me by such representations of life as I now find not to be true; but I know not whether I ought to impute them to ignorance or malice, as it is possible the world may be much changed since they mingled in general conversation.

Being desirous that I should love books, they told me, that nothing but knowledge could make me an agreeable companion to men of sense, or

qualify me to distinguish the superficial glitter of vanity from the solid merit of understanding; and that a habit of reading would enable me to fill up the vacuities of life without the help of silly or dangerous amusements, and preserve me from the snares of idleness and the inroads of temptation.

But their principal intention was to make me afraid of men; in which they succeeded so well for a time, that I durst not look in their faces, or be left alone with them in a parlour; for they made me fancy that no man ever spoke but to deceive, or looked but to allure; that the girl who suffered him that had once squeezed her hand, to approach her a second time, was on the brink of ruin; and that she who answered a billet, without consulting her relations, gave love such power over her, that she would certainly either become poor or infamous.

From the time that my leading-strings were taken off, I scarce heard any mention of my beauty but from the milliner, the mantuamaker, and my own maid; for mamma never said more, when she heard me commended, but "The girl is very well," and then endeavoured to divert my attention by some inquiry after my needle or my book.

It is now three months since I have been suffered to pay and receive visits, to dance at public assemblies, to have a place kept for me in the boxes, and to play at Lady Racket's rout; and you may easily imagine what I think of those who have so long cheated me with false expectations, disturbed me with fictitious terrors and concealed from me all that I have found to make the happiness of woman.

I am so far from perceiving the usefulness or necessity of books, that if I had not dropped all pretensions to learning, I should have lost Mr. Trip, whom I once frighted into another box by retailing some of Dryden's remarks upon a tragedy; for Mr. Trip declares that he hates nothing like hard words, and I am sure there is not a better partner to be found; his very walk is a dance. I have talked once or twice among ladies about principles and ideas: but they put their fans before their faces, and told me I was too wise for them, who for their part never pretended to read any thing but the play-bill; and then asked me the price of my best head.

Those vacancies of time which are to be filled up with books, I have never yet obtained; for consider, Mr. Rambler, I go to bed late, and therefore cannot rise early; as soon as I am up, I dress for the gardens; then walk in the park; then always go to some sale or show, or entertainment at the Little Theatre; then must be dressed for dinner; then must pay my visits; then walk in the park; then hurry to the play; and from thence to the card-table. This is the general course of the day, when there happens nothing extraordinary; but sometimes I ramble into the country, and come back again to a ball; sometimes I am engaged for a whole day and part of the night. If, at any time, I can give an hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many orders to give to the milliner, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, and so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion, forced at last to let in company, or step into my chair, and leave half my affairs to the direction of my maid.

This is the round of my day; and when shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book? I suppose it cannot be imagined that any of these diversions will soon be at an end. There will always be gardens, and a park, and auctions, and shows, and playhouses, and cards; visits will always be paid, and clothes always be worn; and how can I have time unemployed upon my hands?

But I am most at a loss to guess for what purpose they related such tragic stories of the cruelty, perfidy, and artifices of men, who, if they ever were so malicious and destructive, have certainly now reformed their manners. I have not, since my entrance into the world, found one who does not profess himself devoted to my service, and ready to live or die as I shall command him. They are so far from intending to hurt me, that their only contention is who shall be allowed most closely to attend, and most frequently to treat me. When different places of entertainment or schemes of pleasure are mentioned, I can see the eye sparkle and the cheeks glow of him whose proposals obtain my approbation; he then leads me off in triumph, adores my condescension, and congratulates himself that he has lived to the hour of felicity. Are these, Mr. Rambler, creatures to be feared? Is it likely that any injury will be done me by those who can enjoy life only while I favour them with my presence?

As little reason can I yet find to suspect them of stratagems and fraud. When I play at cards, they never take advantage of my mistakes, or exact from me a rigorous observation of the game. Even Mr. Shuffle, a grave gentleman, who has daughters older than myself, plays with me so negligently, that I am sometimes inclined to believe he loses his money by design; and yet he is so fond of play, that he says he will one day take me to his house in the country, that we may try by ourselves who can conquer. I have not yet promised him; but when the town grows a little empty, I shall think upon it, for I want some trinkets, like Letitia's, to my watch. I do not doubt my luck, but must study some means of amusing my relations.

For all these distinctions I find myself indebted to that beauty which I was never suffered to hear praised, and of which, therefore, I did not before know the full value. This concealment was certainly an intentional fraud; for my aunts have eyes like other people, and I am every day told, that nothing but blindness can escape the influence of my charms. Their whole account of that world which they pretend to know so well, has been only one fiction entangled with another; and though the modes of life oblige me to continue some appearances of respect, I cannot think that they, who have been so clearly detected in ignorance or imposture, have any right to the esteem, veneration, or obedience of,

Sir, yours, BELLARIA.

No. 192.] SATURDAY, JAN. 18, 1752.

Γένος οὐδὲν εἰς ἔρωτα,
Σοφίη, τρόπος πατεῖται·
Μόνον ἀργυρον βλέπουσιν.
Ἀπόλοιτο πρῶτος αὐτὸς

Ὁ τὸν ἄργυρον φιλήσας·
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐκ ἀδελφός,
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐ τοκῆες.
Πόλεμοι, φόνοι δι' αὐτόν.
Τὸ δὲ χεῖρον, ὀλλύμεσθα
Διὰ τοῦτον οἱ φιλοῦντες. ANACREON.

In vain the noblest birth would prove,
Nor worth nor wit avail in love;
'Tis gold alone succeeds—by gold
The venal sex is bought and sold.
Accursed be he who first of yore
Discovered the pernicious ore!
This sets a brother's heart on fire,
And arms the son against the sire;
And what, alas! is worse than all,
To this the lover owes his fall. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM the son of a gentleman whose ancestors for many ages held the first rank in the country; till at last one of them, too desirous of popularity, set his house open, kept a table covered with continual profusion, and distributed his beef and ale to such as chose rather to live upon the folly of others, than their own labour, with such thoughtless liberality, that he left a third part of his estate mortgaged. His successor a man of spirit, scorned to impair his dignity by parsimonious retrenchments, or to admit, by a sale of his lands, any participation of the rights of his manor; he therefore made another mortgage to pay the interest of the former, and pleased himself with the reflection, that his son would have the hereditary estate without the diminution of an acre.

Nearly resembling this was the practice of my wise progenitors for many ages. Every man boasted the antiquity of his family, resolved to support the dignity of his birth, and lived in splendour and plenty at the expense of his heir, who, sometimes by a wealthy marriage, and sometimes by lucky legacies, discharged part of the incumbrances, and thought himself entitled to contract new debts, and to leave to his children the same inheritance of embarrassment and distress. Thus the estate perpetually decayed; the woods were felled by one, the park ploughed by another, the fishery let to farmers by a third; at last the old hall was pulled down to spare the cost of reparation, and part of the materials sold to build a small house with the rest. We were now openly degraded from our original rank, and my father's brother was allowed with less reluctance to serve an apprenticeship, though we never reconciled ourselves heartily to the sound of haberdasher, but always talked of warehouses and a merchant, and when the wind happened to blow loud, affected to pity the hazards of commerce, and to sympathize with the solicitude of my poor uncle, who had the true retailer's terror of adventure, and never exposed himself or his property to any wider water than the Thames.

In time, however, by continual profit and small expenses, he grew rich, and began to turn his thoughts towards rank. He hung the arms of the family over his parlour-chimney; pointed at a chariot decorated only with a cipher; became of opinion that money could not make a gentleman; resented the petulance of upstarts; told stories of Alderman Puff's grandfather, the porter; wondered that there was no better method for regulating precedence; wished for some dress peculiar to men of fashion; and when his servant presented a letter, always inquired whether it came from his brother the esquire.

My father was careful to send him game by every carrier, which, though the conveyance often cost more than the value, was well received, because it gave an opportunity of calling his friends together, describing the beauty of his brother's seat, and lamenting his own folly, whom no remonstrances could withhold from polluting his fingers with a shop-book.

The little presents which we sent were alway returned with great munificence. He was desirous of being the second founder of his family and could not bear that we should be any longer outshone by those whom we considered as climbers upon our ruins, and usurpers of our fortune. He furnished our house with all the elegance of fashionable expense, and was careful to conceal his bounties, lest the poverty of his family should be suspected.

At length it happened that, by misconduct like our own, a large estate, which had been purchased from us, was again exposed to the best bidder. My uncle, delighted with an opportunity of reinstating the family in their possessions, came down with treasures scarcely to be imagined in a place where commerce has not made large sums familiar, and at once drove all the competitors away, expedited the writings, and took possession. He now considered himself as superior to trade, disposed of his stock, and as soon as he had settled his economy, began to show his rural sovereignty, by breaking the hedges of his tenants in hunting, and seizing the guns or nets of those whose fortunes did not qualify them for sportsmen. He soon afterwards solicited the office of sheriff, from which all his neighbours were glad to be reprieved, but which he regarded as a resumption of ancestral claims, and a kind of restoration to blood after the attainder of a trade.

My uncle, whose mind was so filled with this change of his condition, that he found no want of domestic entertainment, declared himself too old to marry, and resolved to let the newly-purchased estate fall into the regular channel of inheritance, I was therefore considered as heir-apparent and courted with officiousness and caresses, by the gentlemen who had hitherto coldly allowed me that rank which they could not refuse, depressed me with studied neglect, and irritated me with ambiguous insults.

I felt not much pleasure from the civilities for which I knew myself indebted to my uncle's industry, till, by one of the invitations which every day now brought me, I was induced to spend a week with Lucius, whose daughter Flavilla I had often seen and admired like others, without any thought of nearer approaches. The inequality which had hitherto kept me at a distance being now levelled, I was received with every evidence of respect; Lucius told me the fortune which he intended for his favourite daughter, many odd accidents obliged us to be often together without company, and I soon began to find that they were spreading for me the nets of matrimony.

Flavilla was all softness and complaisance. I, who have been excluded by a narrow fortune from much acquaintance with the world, and never been honoured before with the notice of so fine a lady, was easily enamoured. Lucius either perceived my passion, or Flavilla betrayed it;

care was taken that our private meetings should be less frequent, and my charmer confessed by her eyes how much pain she suffered from our restraint. I renewed my visit upon every pretence, but was not allowed one interview without witness: at last I declared my passion to Lucius, who received me as a lover worthy of his daughter, and told me that nothing was wanting to his consent, but that my uncle should settle his estate upon me. I objected the indecency of encroaching on his life, and the danger of provoking him by such an unseasonable demand. Lucius seemed not to think decency of much importance, but admitted the danger of displeasing, and concluded that, as he was now old and sickly, we might, without any inconvenience, wait for his death.

With this resolution I was better contented, as it procured me the company of Flavilla, in which the days passed away amidst continual rapture; but in time I began to be ashamed of sitting idle, in expectation of growing rich by the death of my benefactor, and proposed to Lucius many schemes of raising my own fortune by such assistance as I knew my uncle willing to give me. Lucius, afraid lest I should change my affection in absence, diverted me from my design by dissuasives to which my passion easily listened. At last my uncle died, and considering himself as neglected by me, from the time that Flavilla took possession of my heart, left his estate to my younger brother, who was always hovering about his bed, and relating stories of my pranks and extravagance, my contempt of the commercial dialect, and my impatience to be selling stock.

My condition was soon known, and I was no longer admitted by the father of Flavilla. I repeated the protestations of regard, which had been formerly returned with so much ardour, in a letter which she received privately, but returned by her father's footman. Contempt has driven out my love, and I am content to have purchased, by the loss of fortune, an escape from a harpy, who has joined the artifices of age to the allurements of youth. I am now going to pursue my former projects with a legacy which my uncle bequeathed me, and if I succeed, shall expect to hear of the repentance of Flavilla.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

CONSTANTIUS.

No. 193.] TUESDAY, JAN. 21, 1752.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello. HOR.

Or art thou vain? books yield a certain spell
To stop thy tumour; you shall cease to swell
When you have read them thrice, and studied well.
CREECH.

WHATEVER is universally desired will be sought by industry and artifice, by merit and crimes, by means good and bad, rational and absurd, according to the prevalence of virtue or vice, of wisdom or folly. Some will always mistake the degree of their own desert, and some will desire that others may mistake it. The cunning will have recourse to stratagem, and the powerful to violence, for the attainment of their wishes; some will stoop to theft, and others venture upon plunder.

Praise is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions. The desire of commendation, as of every thing else, is varied indeed by innumerable differences of temper, capacity, and knowledge; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club? some expect the acclamations of a county; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view; none, however mean, ever sinks below the hope of being distinguished by his fellow-beings, and very few have by magnanimity or piety, been so raised above it, as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion.

To be praised, therefore, every man resolves; but resolutions will not execute themselves. That which all think too parsimoniously distributed to their own claims, they will not gratuitously squander upon others, and some expedient must be tried, by which praise may be gained before it can be enjoyed.

Among the innumerable bidders for praise, some are willing to purchase at the highest rate, and offer ease and health, fortune and life. Yet even of these only a small part have gained what they so earnestly desired; the student wastes away in meditation, and the soldier perishes on the ramparts, but unless some accidental advantage co-operates with merit, neither perseverance nor advantage attract attention, and learning and bravery sink into the grave, without honour or remembrance.

But ambition and vanity generally expect to be gratified on easier terms. It has been long observed, that what is procured by skill or labour to the first possessor, may be afterwards transferred for money; and that the man of wealth may partake all the acquisitions of courage without hazard, and all the products of industry without fatigue, it was easily discovered that riches would obtain praise among other conveniences, and that he whose pride was unluckily associated with laziness, ignorance, or cowardice, needed only to pay the hire of a panegyrist, and he might be regaled with periodical eulogies; might determine, at leisure, what virtue or science he would be pleased to appropriate, and be lulled in the evening with soothing serenades, or waked in the morning by sprightly gratulations.

The happiness which mortals receive from the celebration of beneficence which never relieved, eloquence which never persuaded, or elegance which never pleased, ought not to be envied or disturbed, when they are known honestly to pay for their entertainment. But there are unmerciful exactors of adulation, who withhold the wages of venality; retain their encomiast from year to year by general promises and ambiguous blandishments; and when he has run through the whole compass of flattery, dismiss him with contempt, because his vein of fiction is exhausted.

A continual feast of commendation is only to be obtained by merit or by wealth; many are therefore obliged to content themselves with single morsels, and recompense the infrequency of their enjoyment by excess and riot, whenever fortune sets the banquet before them. Hunger is never delicate; they, who are seldom gorged to the full with praise, may be safely fed with gross compliments; for the appetite must be satisfied before it is disgusted.

It is easy to find the moment at which vanity is eager for sustenance, and all that impudence or servility can offer will be well received. When any one complains of the want of what he is known to possess in an uncommon degree, he certainly waits with impatience to be contradicted. When the trader pretends anxiety about the payment of his bills, or the beauty remarks how frightfully she looks, then is the lucky moment to talk of riches or of charms, of the death of lovers, or the honour of a merchant.

Others there are yet more open and artless, who, instead of suborning a flatterer, are content to supply his place, and, as some animals impregnate themselves, swell with the praises which they hear from their own tongues. *Recte is dicitur laudare sese, cui nemo alius contigit laudator.* "It is right," says Erasmus, "that he, whom no one else will commend, should bestow commendations on himself." Of all the sons of vanity, these are surely the happiest and greatest; for what is greatness or happiness but independence on external influences, exemption from hope, or fear, and the power of supplying every want from the common stores of nature, which can neither be exhausted nor prohibited? Such is the wise man of the stoics; such is the divinity of the Epicureans; and such is the flatterer of himself. Every other enjoyment malice may destroy; every other panegyric envy may withhold; but no human power can deprive the boaster of his own encomiums. Infamy may hiss, or contempt may growl; the hirelings of the great may follow fortune, and the votaries of truth may attend on virtue; but his pleasures still remain the same; he can always listen with rapture to himself, and leave those who dare not repose upon their own attestation, to be elated or depressed by chance, and toil on in the hopeless task of fixing caprice, and propitiating malice.

This art of happiness has been long practised by periodical writers, with little apparent violation of decency. When we think our excellences overlooked by the world, or desire to recall the attention of the public to some particular performance, we sit down with great composure, and write a letter to ourselves. The correspondent, whose character we assume, always addresses us with the deference due to a superior intelligence; proposes his doubts with a proper sense of his own inability; offers an objection with trembling diffidence; and at last has no other pretensions to our notice than his profundity of respect, and sincerity of admiration, his submission to our dictates, and zeal for our success. To such a reader, it is impossible to refuse regard, nor can it easily be imagined with how much alacrity we snatch up the pen which indignation or despair had condemned to inactivity, when we find such candour and judgment yet remaining in the world.

A letter of this kind I had lately the honour of perusing, in which, though some of the periods were negligently closed, and some expressions of familiarity were used, which I thought might teach others to address me with too little reverence, I was so much delighted with the passages in which mention was made of universal learning —unbounded genius—soul of Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato—solidity of thought—accuracy of distinction—elegance of combination—vigour of fancy—strength of reason—and regularity of composition—that I had once determined to lay it before the public. Three times I sent it to the printer, and three times I fetched it back. My modesty was on the point of yielding, when reflecting that I was about to waste panegyrics on myself, which might be more profitably reserved for my patron, I locked it up for a better hour, in compliance with the farmer's principle, who never eats at home what he can carry to the market.

No. 194.] SATURDAY, JAN. 25, 1752.

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et hæres
Bullatus, parvoque eadem movet arma fritillo. JUV

If gaming does an aged sire entice,
Then my young master swiftly learns the vice,
And shakes in hanging sleeves the little box and dice.
J. DRYDEN, Jun

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THAT vanity which keeps every man important in his own eyes, inclines me to believe that neither you nor your readers have yet forgotten the name of Eumathes, who sent you a few months ago an account of his arrival at London, with a young nobleman his pupil. I shall therefore continue my narrative without preface or recapitulation.

My pupil, in a very short time, by his mother's countenance and direction, accomplished himself with all those qualifications which constitute puerile politeness. He became in a few days a perfect master of his hat, which with a careless nicety he could put off or on, without any need to adjust it by a second motion. This was not attained but by frequent consultations with his dancing master, and constant practice before the glass, for he had some rustic habits to overcome; but what will not time and industry perform? A fortnight more furnished him with all the airs and forms of familiar and respectful salutation, from the clap on the shoulder to the humble bow; he practises the stare of strangeness, and the smile of condescension, the solemnity of promise, and the graciousness of encouragement, as if he had been nursed at a levee; and pronounces, with no less propriety than his father, the monosyllables of coldness, and sonorous periods of respectful profession.

He immediately lost the reserve and timidity which solitude and study are apt to impress upon the most courtly genius; was able to enter a crowded room with airy civility; to meet the glances of a hundred eyes without perturbation; and address those whom he never saw before with ease and confidence. In less than a month his mother declared her satisfaction at his proficiency by a triumphant observation that she believed *nothing would make him blush.*

The silence with which I was contented to hear my pupil's praises, gave the lady reason to suspect me not much delighted with his acquisitions; but she attributed my discontent to the diminution of my influence, and my fears of losing the patronage of the family, and though she thinks favourably of my learning and morals, she considers me as wholly unacquainted with the customs of the polite part of mankind; and therefore not qualified to form the manners of a young nobleman, or communicate the knowledge of the world. This knowledge she com-

prises in the rules of visiting, the history of the present hour, an early intelligence of the change of fashions, an extensive acquaintance with the names and faces of persons of rank, and a frequent appearance in places of resort.

All this my pupil pursues with great application. He is twice a day in the Mall, where he studies the dress of every man splendid enough to attract his notice, and never comes home without some observation upon sleeves, button-holes, and embroidery. At his return from the theatre, he can give an account of the gallantries, glances, whispers, smiles, sighs, flirts, and blushes of every box, so much to his mother's satisfaction, that when I attempted to resume my character, by inquiring his opinion of the sentiments and diction of the tragedy, she at once repressed my criticism, by telling me, *that she hoped he did not go to lose his time in attending to the creatures on the stage.*

But his acuteness was most eminently signalized at the masquerade, where he discovered his acquaintance through their disguises, with such wonderful facility, as has afforded the family an inexhaustible topic of conversation. Every new visiter is informed how one was detected by his gait, and another by the swing of his arms, a third by the toss of his head, and another by his favourite phrase; nor can you doubt but these performances receive their just applause, and a genius thus hastening to maturity is promoted by every art of cultivation.

Such have been his endeavours, and such his assistances, that every trace of literature was soon obliterated. He has changed his language with his dress, and, instead of endeavouring at purity or propriety, has no other care than to catch the reigning phrase and current exclamation, till, by copying whatever is peculiar in the talk of all those whose birth or fortune entitles them to imitation, he has collected every fashionable barbarism of the present winter, and speaks a dialect not to be understood among those who form their style by poring upon authors.

To this copiousness of ideas, and felicity of language, he has joined such eagerness to lead the conversation, that he is celebrated among the ladies as the prettiest gentleman that the age can boast of, except that some who love to talk themselves think him too forward, and others lament that, with so much wit and knowledge, he is not taller.

His mother listens to his observations with her eyes sparkling, and her heart beating, and can scarcely contain, in the most numerous assemblies, the expectations which she has formed for his future eminence. Women, by whatever fate, always judge absurdly of the intellects of boys. The vivacity and confidence which attract female admiration, are seldom produced in the early part of life, but by ignorance at least, if not by stupidity; for they proceed not from confidence of right, but fearlessness of wrong. Whoever has a clear apprehension, must have quick sensibility, and where he has no sufficient reason to trust his own judgment, will proceed with doubt and caution, because he perpetually dreads the disgrace of error. The pain of miscarriage is naturally proportionate to the desire of excellence; and, therefore, till men are hardened by long familiarity with reproach, or have attained, by frequent struggles, the art of suppressing their emotions, diffidence is found the inseparable associate of understanding.

But so little distrust has my pupil of his own abilities, that he has for some time professed himself a wit, and tortures his imagination on all occasions for burlesque and jocularity. How he supports a character which, perhaps, no man ever assumed without repentance, may be easily conjectured. Wit, you know, is the unexpected copulation of ideas, the discovery of some occult relation between images in appearance remote from each other; an effusion of wit, therefore, presupposes an accumulation of knowledge; a memory stored with notions, which the imagination may cull out to compose new assemblages. Whatever may be the native vigour of the mind, she can never form many combinations from few ideas, as many changes can never be rung upon a few bells. Accident may indeed sometimes produce a lucky parallel or a striking contrast: but these gifts of chance are not frequent, and he that has nothing of his own, and yet condemns himself to needless expenses, must live upon loans or theft.

The indulgence which his youth has hitherto obtained, and the respect which his rank secures, have hitherto supplied the want of intellectual qualifications; and he imagines that all admire who applaud, and that all who laugh are pleased. He therefore returns every day to the charge with increase of courage, though not of strength, and practises all the tricks by which wit is counterfeited. He lays trains for a quibble; he contrives blunders for his footman; he adapts old stories to present characters; he mistakes the question, that he may return a smart answer; he anticipates the argument, that he may plausibly object; when he has nothing to reply, he repeats the last words of his antagonist, then says, "your humble servant," and concludes with a laugh of triumph.

These mistakes I have honestly attempted to correct; but what can be expected from reason unsupported by fashion, splendour, or authority? He hears me, indeed, or appears to hear me, but is soon rescued from the lecture by more pleasing avocations; and shows, diversions and caresses, drive my precepts from his remembrance.

He at last imagines himself qualified to enter the world, and has met with adventures in his first sally, which I shall, by your paper, communicate to the public. I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 195.] TUESDAY, JAN. 28, 1752

——Nescit equo rudis
Hærere ingenuus puer
Venarique timet; ludere doctior
Seu Græco jubeas trochо,
Seu malis vetita legibus alea. HOR.

Nor knows our youth, of noblest race,
To mount the managed steed or urge the chase;
More skill'd in the mean arts of vice,
The whirling troque, or law-forbidden dice.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

FAVOURS of every kind are doubled when they are speedily conferred. This is particularly true of the gratification of curiosity: he that long delays a story, and suffers his auditor to torment

himself with expectation, will seldom be able to recompense the uneasiness, or equal the hope which he suffers to be raised.

For this reason, I have already sent you the continuation of my pupil's history, which, though it contains no events very uncommon, may be of use to young men who are in too much haste, to trust their own prudence, and quit the wing of protection before they are able to shift for themselves.

When he first settled in London, he was so much bewildered in the enormous extent of the town, so confounded by incessant noise, and crowds, and hurry, and so terrified by rural narratives of the arts of sharpers, the rudeness of the populace, malignity of porters, and treachery of coachmen, that he was afraid to go beyond the door without an attendant, and imagined his life in danger if he was obliged to pass the streets at night in any vehicle but his mother's chair.

He was therefore contented, for a time, that I should accompany him in all his excursions. But his fear abated as he grew more familiar with its objects; and the contempt to which his rusticity exposed him from such of his companions as had accidentally known the town longer, obliged him to dissemble his remaining terrors.

His desire of liberty made him now willing to spare me the trouble of observing his motions; but knowing how much his ignorance exposed him to mischief, I thought it cruel to abandon him to the fortune of the town. We went together every day to a coffee-house, where he met wits, heirs, and fops, airy, ignorant, and thoughtless as himself, with whom he had become acquainted at card-tables, and whom he considered as the only beings to be envied or admired. What were their topics of conversation, I could never discover; for so much was their vivacity depressed by my intrusive seriousness, that they seldom proceeded beyond the exchange of nods and shrugs, an arch grin, or a broken hint, except when they could retire, while I was looking on the papers, to a corner of the room, where they seemed to disburthen their imaginations, and commonly vented the superfluity of their sprightliness in a peal of laughter. When they had tittered themselves into negligence, I could sometimes overhear a few syllables, such as—solemn rascal—academical airs—smoke the tutor—company for gentlemen—and other broken phrases, by which I did not suffer my quiet to be disturbed, for they never proceeded to avowed indignities, but contented themselves to murmur in secret, and whenever I turned my eye upon them, shrunk into stillness.

He was, however, desirous of withdrawing from the subjection which he could not venture to break, and made a secret appointment to assist his companions in the persecution of a play. His footman privately procured him a catcall, on which he practised, in a back garret, for two hours in the afternoon. At the proper time a chair was called; he pretended an engagement at Lady Flutter's, and hastened to the place where his critical associates had assembled. They hurried away to the theatre, full of malignity and denunciations against a man whose name they had never heard, and a performance which they could not understand; for they were resolved to judge for themselves, and would not suffer the town to be imposed upon by scribblers. In the pit, they exerted themselves with great spirit and vivacity; called out for the tunes of obscene songs, talked loudly at intervals of Shakspeare and Jonson, played on their catcalls a short prelude of terror, clamoured vehemently for the prologue, and clapped with great dexterity at the first entrance of the players.

Two scenes they heard without attempting interruption; but being no longer able to restrain their impatience, they then began to exert themselves in groans and hisses, and plied their catcalls with incessant diligence; so that they were soon considered by the audience as disturbers of the house, and some who sat near them, either provoked at the obstruction of their entertainment, or desirous to preserve the author from the mortification of seeing his hopes destroyed by children, snatched away their instruments of criticism, and, by the seasonable vibration of a stick, subdued them instantaneously to decency and silence.

To exhilarate themselves after this vexatious defeat, they posted to a tavern, where they recovered their alacrity, and, after two hours of obstreperous jollity, burst out big with enterprise, and panting for some occasion to signalise their prowess. They proceeded vigorously through two streets, and with very little opposition dispersed a rabble of drunkards less daring than themselves, then rolled two watchmen in the kennel, and broke the windows of a tavern in which the fugitives took shelter. At last it was determined to march up to a row of chairs, and demolish them for standing on the pavement; the chairmen formed a line of battle, and blows were exchanged for a time with equal courage on both sides. At last the assailants were overpowered, and the chairmen, when they knew their captives brought them home by force.

The young gentleman, next morning, hung his head, and was so much ashamed of his outrages and defeat, that perhaps he might have been checked in his first follies, had not his mother, partly in pity of his dejection, and partly in approbation of his spirit, relieved him from his perplexity by paying the damages privately, and discouraging all animadversion and reproof.

This indulgence could not wholly preserve him from the remembrance of his disgrace, nor at once restore his confidence and elation. He was for three days silent, modest and compliant, and thought himself neither too wise for instruction, nor too manly for restraint. But his levity overcame this salutary sorrow; he began to talk with his former raptures of masquerades, taverns, and frolics; blustered when his wig was not combed with exactness; and threatened destruction to a tailor who had mistaken his directions about the pocket.

I knew that he was now rising again above control, and that this inflation of spirits would burst out into some mischievous absurdity. I therefore watched him with great attention; but one evening, having attended his mother at a visit, he withdrew himself unsuspected, while the company was engaged at cards. His vivacity and officiousness were soon missed, and his return impatiently expected; supper was delayed and conversation suspended; every coach that rattled through the street was expected to bring him, and every servant that entered the room

was examined concerning his departure. At last the lady returned home, and was with great difficulty preserved from fits by spirits and cordials. The family was despatched a thousand ways without success, and the house was filled with distraction, till, as we were deliberating what further measures to take, he returned from a petty gaming-table, with his coat torn, and his head broken; without his sword, snuff-box, sleeve-buttons, and watch.

Of this loss, or robbery, he gave little account; but, instead of sinking into his former shame, endeavoured to support himself by surliness and asperity. "He was not the first that had played away a few trifles, and of what use were birth and fortune if they would not admit some sallies and expenses?" His mamma was so much provoked by the cost of this prank, that she would neither palliate nor conceal it; and his father, after some threats of rustication which his fondness would not suffer him to execute, reduced the allowance of his pocket, that he might not be tempted by plenty to profusion. This method would have succeeded in a place where there are no panders to folly and extravagance, but was now likely to have produced pernicious consequences; for we have discovered a treaty with a broker, whose daughter he seems disposed to marry, on condition that he shall be supplied with present money, for which he is to repay thrice the value at the death of his father.

There was now no time to be lost. A domestic consultation was immediately held, and he was doomed to pass two years in the country; but his mother, touched with his tears, declared that she thought him too much of a man to be any longer confined to his book, and he therefore begins his travels to-morrow under a French governor.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 196.] SATURDAY, FEB. 1, 1752.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt.—— HOR.

The blessings flowing in with life's full tide
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide.
FRANCIS.

BAXTER, in the narrative of his own life, has enumerated several opinions, which, though he thought them evident and incontestable at his first entrance into the world, time and experience disposed him to change.

Whoever reviews the state of his own mind from the dawn of manhood to its decline, and considers what he pursued or dreaded, slighted or esteemed, at different periods of his age, will have no reason to imagine such changes of sentiment peculiar to any station or character. Every man, however careless and inattentive, has conviction forced upon him; the lectures of time obtrude themselves upon the most unwilling or dissipated auditor; and by comparing our past with our present thoughts, we perceive that we have changed our minds, though perhaps we cannot discover when the alteration happened, or by what causes it was produced.

This revolution of sentiments occasions a perpetual contest between the old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt, for want of considering that the future and the past have different appearances; that the disproportion will always be great between expectation and enjoyment, between new possession and satiety; that the truth of many maxims of age gives too little pleasure to be allowed till it is felt; and that the miseries of life would be increased beyond all human power of endurance, if we were to enter the world with the same opinions as we carry from it.

We naturally indulge those ideas that please us. Hope will predominate in every mind, till it has been suppressed by frequent disappointments. The youth has not yet discovered how many evils are continually hovering about us, and when he is set free from the shackles of discipline, looks abroad into the world with rapture; he sees an elysian region open before him, so variegated with beauty, and so stored with pleasure, that his care is rather to accumulate good, than to shun evil; he stands distracted by different forms of delight, and has no other doubt, than which path to follow of those which all lead equally to the bowers of happiness.

He who has seen only the superficies of life believes every thing to be what it appears, and rarely suspects that external splendour conceals any latent sorrow or vexation. He never imagines that there may be greatness without safety, affluence without content, jollity without friendship, and solitude without peace. He fancies himself permitted to cull the blessings of every condition, and to leave its inconveniences to the idle and the ignorant. He is inclined to believe no man miserable but by his own fault, and seldom looks with much pity upon failings or miscarriages, because he thinks them willingly admitted, or negligently incurred.

It is impossible, without pity and contempt, to hear a youth of generous sentiments and warm imagination, declaring in the moment of openness and confidence, his designs and expectations; because long life is possible, he considers it as certain, and therefore promises himself all the changes of happiness, and provides gratifications for every desire. He is, for a time, to give himself wholly to frolic and diversion, to range the world in search of pleasure, to delight every eye, to gain every heart, and to be celebrated equally for his pleasing levities and solid attainments, his deep reflections and his sparkling repartees. He then elevates his views to nobler enjoyments, and finds all the scattered excellences of the female world united in a woman, who prefers his addresses to wealth and titles; he is afterwards to engage in business, to dissipate difficulty, and overpower opposition; to climb, by the mere force of merit, to fame and greatness; and reward all those who countenanced his rise, or paid due regard to his early excellence. At last he will retire in peace and honour; contract his views to domestic pleasures; form the manners of children like himself; observe how every year expands the beauty of his daughters, and how his sons catch ardour from their father's history; he will give laws to the neighbourhood, dictate axioms to posterity; and leave the world an example of wisdom and of happiness.

With hopes like these, he sallies jocund into

life; to little purpose is he told, that the condition of humanity admits no pure and unmingled happiness; that the exuberant gayety of youth ends in poverty or disease; that uncommon qualifications and contrarieties of excellence, produce envy equally with applause; that, whatever admiration and fondness may promise him, he must marry a wife like the wives of others, with some virtues and some faults, and be as often disgusted by her vices, as delighted by her elegance; that if he adventures into the circle of action, he must expect to encounter men as artful, as daring, as resolute as himself; that of his children, some may be deformed, and others vicious; some may disgrace him by their follies; some offend him by their insolence, and some exhaust him by their profusion. He hears all this with obstinate incredulity, and wonders by what malignity old age is influenced, that it cannot forbear to fill his ears with predictions of misery.

Among other pleasing errors of young minds, is the opinion of their own importance. He that has not yet remarked how little attention his contemporaries can spare from their own affairs, conceives all eyes turned upon himself, and imagines every one that approaches him to be an enemy or a follower, an admirer or a spy. He therefore considers his fame as involved in the event of every action. Many of the virtues and vices of youth proceed from this quick sense of reputation. This it is that gives firmness and constancy, fidelity and disinterestedness, and it is this that kindles resentment for slight injuries, and dictates all the principles of sanguinary honour.

But as time brings him forward into the world, he soon discovers that he only shares fame or reproach with innumerable partners; that he is left unmarked in the obscurity of the crowd; and that what he does, whether good or bad, soon gives way to new objects of regard. He then easily sets himself free from the anxieties of reputation, and considers praise or censure as a transient breath, which, while he hears it, is passing away, without any lasting mischief or advantage.

In youth, it is common to measure right and wrong by the opinion of the world, and in age, to act without any measure but interest, and to lose shame without substituting virtue.

Such is the condition of life, that something is always wanting to happiness. In youth, we have warm hopes, which are soon blasted by rashness and negligence, and great designs, which are defeated by inexperience. In age, we have knowledge and prudence without spirit to exert, or motives to prompt them; we are able to plan schemes, and regulate measures; but have not time remaining to bring them to completion.

No. 197.] TUESDAY, FEB. 4, 1752.

Cujus vulturis hoc crit cadaver? MART.

Say, to what vulture's share this carcass falls?
F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I BELONG to an order of mankind, considerable at least for their number, to which your notice has never been formally extended, though equally entitled to regard with those triflers, who have hitherto supplied you with topics of amusement or instruction. I am, Mr. Rambler, a legacy-hunter; and, as every man is willing to think well of the tribe in which his name is registered, you will forgive my vanity, if I remind you that the legacy-hunter, however degraded by an ill-compounded appellation in our barbarous language, was known, as I am told, in ancient Rome, by the sonorous titles of *captator* and *hæredipeta*.

My father was an attorney in the country, who married his master's daughter in hopes of a fortune which he did not obtain, having been, as he afterwards discovered, chosen by her only because she had no better offer, and was afraid of service. I was the first offspring of a marriage, thus reciprocally fraudulent, and therefore could not be expected to inherit much dignity or generosity, and if I had them not from nature, was not likely ever to attain them; for, in the years which I spent at home, I never heard any reason for action or forbearance, but that we should gain money or lose it; nor was taught any other style of commendation, than that Mr. Sneaker is a warm man, Mr. Gripe has done his business, and needs care for nobody.

My parents, though otherwise not great philosophers, knew the force of early education, and took care that the blank of my understanding should be filled with impressions of the value of money. My mother used, upon all occasions, to inculcate some salutary axioms, such as might incite *me to keep what I had, and get what I could;* she informed me that we were in a world, where *all must catch that catch can;* and as I grew up, stored my memory with deeper observations; restrained me from the usual puerile expenses, by remarking that *many a little make a mickle;* and when I envied the finery of my neighbours, told me that *brag was a good dog, but holdfast was a better.*

I was soon sagacious enough to discover that I was not born to great wealth; and having heard no other name for happiness, was sometimes inclined to repine at my condition. But my mother always relieved me by saying that there was money enough in the family, that *it was good to be of kin to means,* that I had nothing to do but to please my friends, and I might come to hold up my head with the best squire in the country.

These splendid expectations arose from our alliance to three persons of considerable fortune. My mother's aunt had attended on a lady, who, when she died, rewarded her officiousness and fidelity with a large legacy. My father had two relations, of whom one had broken his indentures and run to sea, from whence, after an absence of thirty years, he returned with ten thousand pounds; and the other had lured an heiress out of a window, who dying of her first child, had left him her estate, on which he lived, without any other care than to collect his rents, and preserve from poachers that game which he could not kill himself.

These hoarders of money were visited and courted by all who had any pretence to approach them, and received presents and compliments from cousins who could scarcely tell the degree of their relation. But we had peculiar advan

tages, which encouraged us to hope, that we should by degrees supplant our competitors. My father, by his profession, made himself necessary in their affairs; for the sailor and the chambermaid, he inquired out mortgages and securities, and wrote bonds and contracts; and had endeared himself to the old woman, who once rashly lent a hundred pounds without consulting him, by informing her that her debtor was on the point of bankruptcy, and posting so expeditiously with an execution that all the other creditors were defrauded.

To the squire he was a kind of steward, and had distinguished himself in his office by his address in raising the rents, his inflexibility in distressing the tardy tenants, and his acuteness in setting the parish free from burdensome inhabitants, by shifting them off to some other settlement.

Business made frequent attendance necessary; trust soon produced intimacy; and success gave a claim to kindness; so that we had opportunity to practise all the arts of flattery and endearment. My mother, who could not support the thought of losing any thing, determined that all their fortunes should centre in me; and, in the prosecution of her schemes, took care to inform me that *nothing cost less than good words*, and that it is comfortable to leap into an estate which another has got.

She trained me by these precepts to the utmost ductility of obedience, and the closest attention to profit. At an age when other boys are sporting the fields, or murmuring in the school, I was contriving some new method of paying my court; inquiring the age of my future benefactors; or considering how I should employ their legacies.

If our eagerness of money could have been satisfied with the possessions of any one of my relations, they might perhaps have been obtained, but as it was impossible to be always present with all three, our competitors were busy to efface any trace of affection which we might have left behind; and since there was not, on any part, such superiority of merit as could enforce a constant and unshaken preference, whoever was the last that flattered or obliged had for a time the ascendant.

My relations maintained a regular exchange of courtesy, took care to miss no occasion of condolence or congratulation, and sent presents at stated times, but had in their hearts not much esteem for one another. The seaman looked with contempt upon the squire as a milksop and a landman, who had lived without knowing the points of the compass, or seeing any part of the world beyond the county-town; and, whenever they met, would talk of longitude and latitude, and circles and tropics, would scarcely tell him the hour without some mention of the horizon and meridian, nor show him the news without detecting his ignorance of the situation of other countries.

The squire considered the sailor as a rude uncultivated savage, with little more of human than his form, and diverted himself with his ignorance of all common objects and affairs; when he could persuade him to go into the fields, he always exposed him to the sportsmen, by sending him to look for game in improper places; and once prevailed upon him to be present at the races, only that he might show the gentlemen how a sailor sat upon a horse.

The old gentlewoman thought herself wiser than both, for she lived with no servant but a maid, and saved her money. The others were indeed sufficiently frugal; but the squire could not live without dogs and horses, and the sailor never suffered the day to pass but over a bowl of punch, to which, as he was not critical in the choice of his company, every man was welcome that could roar out a catch, or tell a story.

All these, however, I was to please; an arduous task; but what will not youth and avarice undertake? I had an unresisting suppleness of temper, and an unsatiable wish for riches; I was perpetually instigated by the ambition of my parents, and assisted occasionally by their instructions. What these advantages enabled me to perform, shall be told in the next letter of,

Yours, &c.

CAPTATOR.

No. 198.] SATURDAY, FEB. 8, 1752.

Nil mihi das vivus, dicis post fata daturum,
Si non insanis, scis, Maro, quid cupiam.

MART

You've told me, Maro, whilst you live,
You'd not a single penny give,
But that whene'er you chanced to die
You'd leave a handsome legacy;
You must be mad beyond redress,
If my next wish you cannot guess.

F. LEWIS

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU, who must have observed the inclination which almost every man, however unactive or insignificant, discovers of representing his life as distinguished by extraordinary events, will not wonder that Captator thinks his narrative important enough to be continued. Nothing is more common than for those to teaze their companions with their history, who have neither done nor suffered any thing that can excite curiosity, or afford instruction.

As I was taught to flatter with the first essays of speech, and had very early lost every other passion in the desire of money, I began my pursuit with omens of success; for I divided my officiousness so judiciously among my relations, that I was equally the favourite of all. When any of them entered the door, I went to welcome him with raptures; when he went away, I hung down my head, and sometimes entreated to go with him with so much importunity, that I very narrowly escaped a consent which I dreaded in my heart. When at an annual entertainment they were all together, I had a harder task; but plied them so impatiently with caresses, that none could charge me with neglect; and when they were wearied with my fondness and civilities, I was always dismissed with money to buy playthings.

Life cannot be kept at a stand; the years of innocence and prattle were soon at an end, and other qualifications were necessary to recommend me to continuance of kindness. It luckily happened that none of my friends had high notions of book-learning. The sailor hated to see tall boys shut up in a school, when they might

more properly be seeing the world, and making their fortunes; and was of opinion that, when the first rules of arithmetic were known, all that was necessary to make a man complete might be learned on ship-board. The squire only insisted that so much scholarship was indispensably necessary as might confer ability to draw a lease and read the court-hands; and the old chambermaid declared loudly her contempt of books, and her opinion that they only took the head of the main chance.

To unite, as well as we could, all their systems, I was bred at home. Each was taught to believe that I followed his directions, and I gained likewise, as my mother observed, this advantage, that I was always in the way; for she had known many favourite children sent to schools or academies, and forgotten.

As I grew fitter to be trusted to my own discretion, I was often despatched upon various pretences to visit my relations, with directions from my parents how to ingratiate myself, and drive away competitors.

I was, from my infancy, considered by the sailor as a promising genius, because I liked punch better than wine; and I took care to improve this prepossession by continual inquiries about the art of navigation, the degree of heat and cold in different climates, the profits of trade, and the dangers of shipwreck. I admired the courage of the seaman, and gained his heart by importuning him for a recital of his adventures, and a sight of his foreign curiosities. I listened with an appearance of close attention to stories which I could already repeat, and at the close never failed to express my resolution to visit distant countries, and my contempt of the cowards and drones that spend all their lives in their native parish; though I had in reality no desire of any thing but money, nor ever felt the stimulations of curiosity or ardour of adventure, but would contentedly have passed the years of Nestor in receiving rents, and lending upon mortgages.

The squire I was able to please with less hypocrisy, for I really thought it pleasant enough to kill the game and eat it. Some arts of falsehood, however, the *hunger of gold* persuaded me to practise, by which, though no other mischief was produced, the purity of my thoughts was vitiated, and the reverence for truth gradually destroyed. I sometimes purchased fish, and pretended to have caught them; I hired the countrymen to show me partridges, and then gave my uncle intelligence of their haunt; I learned the seats of hares at night, and discovered them in the morning with a sagacity that raised the wonder and envy of old sportsmen. One only obstruction to the advancement of my reputation I could never fully surmount; I was naturally a coward, and was therefore always left shamefully behind, when there was a necessity to leap a hedge, to swim a river, or force the horses to their utmost speed; but as these exigencies did not frequently happen, I maintained my honour with sufficient success, and was never left out of a hunting party.

The old chambermaid was not so certainly, nor so easily pleased, for she had no predominant passion but avarice, and was therefore cold and inaccessible. She had no conception of any virtue in a young man but that of saving his money. When she heard of my exploits in the field, she would shake her head, inquire how much I should be the richer for all my performances, and lament that such sums should be spent upon dogs and horses. If the sailor told her of my inclination to travel, she was sure there was no place like England, and could not imagine why any man that can live in his own country should leave it. This sullen and frigid being I found means, however, to propitiate by frequent commendations of frugality, and perpetual care to avoid expense.

From the sailor was our first and most considerable expectation; for he was richer than the chambermaid, and older than the squire. He was so awkward and bashful among women, that we concluded him secure from matrimony; and the noisy fondness with which he used to welcome me to his house, made us imagine that he would look out for no other heir, and that we had nothing to do but wait patiently for his death. But in the midst of our triumph, my uncle saluted us one morning with a cry of transport, and clapping his hand hard on my shoulder, told me, I was a happy fellow to have a friend like him in the world, for he came to fit me out for a voyage with one of his old acquaintances. I turned pale and trembled; my father told him that he believed my constitution not fitted to the sea; and my mother, bursting into tears, cried out that her heart would break if she lost me. All this had no effect; the sailor was wholly insusceptive of the softer passions, and, without regard to tears or arguments, persisted in his resolution to make me a man.

We were obliged to comply in appearance, and preparations were accordingly made. I took leave of my friends with great alacrity, proclaimed the beneficence of my uncle with the highest strains of gratitude, and rejoiced at the opportunity now put into my hands of gratifying my thirst of knowledge. But a week before the day appointed for my departure I fell sick by my mother's direction, and refused all food but what she privately brought me; whenever my uncle visited me I was lethargic or delirious, but took care in my raving fits to talk incessantly of travel and merchandize. The room was kept dark; the table was filled with vials and gallipots; my mother was with difficulty persuaded not to endanger her life with nocturnal attendance; my father lamented the loss of the profits of the voyages; and such superfluity of artifices was employed, as perhaps might have discovered the cheat to a man of penetration. But the sailor, unacquainted with subtilties and stratagems, was easily deluded; and as the ship could not stay for my recovery, sold the cargo, and left me to reestablish my health at leisure.

I was sent to regain my flesh in a purer air, lest it should appear never to have been wasted, and in two months returned to deplore my disappointment. My uncle pitied my dejection, and bid me prepare myself against next year, for no land-lubber should touch his money.

A reprieve however was obtained, and perhaps some new stratagem might have succeeded another spring; but my uncle unhappily made amorous advances to my mother's maid: who, to promote so advantageous a match, discovered the secret with which only she had been entrusted. He stormed, and raved, and declaring that he

would have heirs of his own, and not give his substance to cheats and cowards, married the girl in two days, and has now four children.

Cowardice is always scorned, and deceit universally detested. I found my friends, if not wholly alienated, at least cooled in their affection; the squire, though he did not wholly discard me, was less fond, and often inquired when I would go to sea. I was obliged to bear his insults, and endeavoured to rekindle his kindness by assiduity and respect; but all my care was vain; he died without a will, and the estate devolved to the legal heir.

Thus has the folly of my parents condemned me to spend in flattery and attendance those years in which I might have been qualified to place myself above hope or fear. I am arrived at manhood without any useful art or generous sentiment; and if the old woman should likewise at last deceive me, am in danger at once of beggary and ignorance.

I am, &c.

CAPTATOR.

No. 199.] TUESDAY, FEB. 11, 1752.

Decolor, obscurus, vilis, non ille repexam
Cæsariem regum, candida virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu;
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tunc superat pulchros cultus, et quicquid Eois
Indus littoribus rubra scrutatur in alga.

CLAUDIANUS.

Obscure, unprized, and dark, the magnet lies,
Nor lures the search of avaricious eyes,
Nor binds the neck, nor sparkles in the hair,
Nor dignifies the great, nor decks the fair.
But search the wonders of the dusky stone,
And own all glories of the mine outdone,
Each grace of form, each ornament of state,
That decks the fair, or dignifies the great.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you have seldom digressed from moral subjects, I suppose you are not so rigorous or cynical as to deny the value or usefulness of natural philosophy; or to have lived in this age of inquiry and experiment, without any attention to the wonders every day produced by the pokers of magnetism and the wheels of electricity. At least, I may be allowed to hope that, since nothing is more contrary to moral excellence than envy, you will not refuse to promote the happiness of others, merely because you cannot partake of their enjoyments.

In confidence, therefore, that your ignorance has not made you an enemy to knowledge, I offer you the honour of introducing to the notice of the public an adept, who, having long laboured for the benefit of mankind, is not willing, like too many of his predecessors, to conceal his secrets in the grave.

Many have signalized themselves my melting their estates in crucibles. I was born to no fortune, and therefore had only my mind and my body to devote to knowledge, and the gratitude of posterity will attest that neither mind nor body has been spared. I have sat whole weeks without sleep by the side of an athanor, to watch the movement of projection; I have made the first experiment in nineteen diving-engines of new construction; I have fallen eleven times speechless under the shock of electricity; I have twice dislocated my limbs, and once fractured my skull in essaying to fly,* and four times endangered my life by submitting to the transfusion of blood.

In the first period of my studies I exerted the powers of my body more than those of my mind, and was not without hopes that fame might be purchased by a few broken bones without the toil of thinking; but having been shattered by some violent experiments; and constrained to confine myself to my books, I passed six and thirty years in searching the treasures of ancient wisdom, but am at last amply recompensed for all my perseverance.

The curiosity of the present race of philosophers, having been long exercised upon electricity, has been lately transformed to magnetism; the qualities of the loadstone have been investigated, if not with much advantage, yet with great applause; and as the highest praise of art is to imitate nature, I hope no man will think the makers of artificial magnets celebrated or reverenced above their deserts.

I have for some time employed myself in the same practice, but with deeper knowledge and more extensive views. While my contemporaries were touching needles and raising weights, or busying themselves with inclination and variation, I have been examining those qualities of magnetism which may be applied to the accommodation and happiness of common life. I have left to inferior understandings the care of conducting the sailor through the hazards of the ocean, and reserved to myself the more difficult and illustrious province of preserving the connubial compact from violation, and setting mankind free for ever from the danger of suppositious children, and the torments of fruitless vigilance and anxious suspicion.

To defraud any man of his due praise is unworthy of a philosopher; I shall therefore openly confess, that I owe the first hint of this inestimable secret to the rabbi Abraham Ben Hannase, who, in his treatise of precious stones, has left this account of the magnet: "The calamita, or loadstone that attracts iron, produces many bad fantasies in man. Women fly from this stone. If therefore any husband be disturbed with jealousy, and fear lest his wife converses with other men, let him lay this stone upon her while she is asleep. If she be pure, she will, when she wakes, clasp her husband fondly in her arms; but if she be guilty, she will fall out of bed, and run away."

When I first read this wonderful passage, I could not easily conceive why it had remained hitherto unregarded in such a zealous competition for magnetical fame. It would surely be unjust to suspect that any of the candidates are strangers to the name or works of rabbi Abraham, or to conclude, from a late edict of the Royal Society in favour of the English language, that philosophy and literature are no longer to act in concert. Yet, how should a quality so useful escape promulgation, but by the obscurity of the language in which it was delivered? Why are footmen and chambermaids paid on every

* It is said that Dr. Johnson once lodged in the same house with a man who broke his legs in attempting to fly.—C.

side for keeping secrets, which no caution nor expense could secure from the all-penetrating magnet? or, Why are so many witnesses summoned, and so many artifices practised, to discover what so easy an experiment would infallibly reveal?

Full of this perplexity, I read the lines of Abraham to a friend, who advised me not to expose my life by a mad indulgence of the love of fame; he warned me, by the fate of Orpheus, that knowledge or genius could give no protection to the invader of female prerogatives; assured me that neither the armour of Achilles, nor the antidotes of Mithridates, would be able to preserve me; and counselled me, if I could not live without renown, to attempt the acquisition of universal empire, in which the honour would perhaps be equal, and the danger certainly be less.

I, a solitary student, pretend not to much knowledge of the world, but am unwilling to think 't so generally corrupt, as that a scheme for the detection of incontinence should bring any danger upon its inventor. My friend has indeed told me that all the women will be my enemies, and that, however I flatter myself with hopes of defence from the men, I shall certainly find myself deserted in the hour of danger. Of the young men, said he, some will be afraid of sharing the disgrace of their mothers, and some the danger of their mistresses; of those who are married, part are already convinced of the falsehood of their wives, and part shut their eyes to avoid conviction; few ever sought for virtue in marriage, and therefore few will try whether they have found it. Almost every man is careless or timorous; and to trust is easier and safer than to examine.

These observations discouraged me, till I began to consider what reception I was likely to find among the ladies, whom I have reviewed under the three classes of maids, wives and widows, and cannot but hope that I may obtain some countenance among them. The single ladies I suppose universally ready to patronize my method, by which connubial wickedness may be detected, since no woman marries with a previous design to be unfaithful to her husband. And, to keep them steady in my cause, I promise never to sell one of my magnets to a man who steals a girl from school, marries a woman forty years younger than himself, or employs the authority of parents to obtain a wife without her own consent.

Among the married ladies, notwithstanding the insinuations of slander, I yet resolve to believe that the greater part are my friends, and am at least convinced, that they who demand the test, and appear on my side will supply by their spirit the deficiency of their numbers, and that their enemies will shrink and quake at the sight of a magnet, as the slaves of Scythia fled from the scourge.

The widows will be confederated in my favour by their curiosity, if not by their virtue; for it may be observed, that women who have outlived their husbands always think themselves entitled to superintend the conduct of young wives; and as they are themselves in no danger from this magnetic trial, I shall expect them to be eminently and unanimously zealous in recommending it.

With these hopes I shall, in a short time, offer to sale magnets armed with a particular metallic composition which concentrates their virtue, and determines their agency. It is known that the efficacy of the magnet in common operations depends much upon its armature; and it cannot be imagined, that a stone, naked, or cased only in the common manner, will discover the virtues ascribed to it by rabbi Abraham. The secret of this metal I shall carefully conceal, and therefore am not afraid of imitators, nor shall trouble the offices with solicitation for a patent.

I shall sell them of different sizes, and the various degrees of strength. I have some of a bulk proper to be hung at the bed's head, as scarecrows, and some so small that they may be easily concealed. Some I have ground into oval forms to be hung at watches; and some, for the curious, I have set in wedding-rings, that ladies may never want an attestation of their innocence. Some I can produce so sluggish and inert, that they will not act before the third failure; and others so vigorous and animated, that they exert their influence against unlawful wishes, if they have been willingly and deliberately indulged. As it is my practice honestly to tell my customers the properties of my magnets, I can judge, by their choice, of the delicacy of their sentiments. Many have been contented to spare cost by purchasing only the lowest degree of efficacy, and all have started with terror from those which operate upon the thoughts. One young lady only fitted on a ring of the strongest energy, and declared that she scorned to separate her wishes from her acts, or allow herself to think what she was forbidden to practise.

I am, &c.

HERMETICUS.

No. 200.] SATURDAY, FEB. 15, 1752.

Nemo petit, modicis quæ mittebantur amicis
A Seneca; quæ Piso bonus, quæ Cotta solebat
Largiri: namque et titulis et fascibus olim
Major habebatur donandi gloria: solum
Poscimus, ut cænes civiliter. Hoc face, et esto.
Esto, ut nunc multi, dives tibi, pauper amicis.

IUV.

No man expects (for who so much a sot?
Who has the times he lives in so forgot?)
What Seneca, what Piso used to send
To raise or to support a sinking friend.
Those godlike men, to wanting virtue kind,
Bounty well placed preferr'd, and well design'd,
To all their titles, all that height of power
Which turns the brains of fools, and fools alone adore.
When your poor client is condemn'd t' attend,
'Tis all we ask, receive him as a friend:
Descend to this, and then we ask no more
Rich to yourself, to all beside be poor. BOWLES.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

SUCH is the tenderness or infirmity of many minds, that, when any affliction oppresses them, they have immediate recourse to lamentation and complaint, which, though it can only be allowed reasonable when evils admit of remedy, and then only when addressed to those from whom the remedy is expected, yet seems even in hopeless and incurable distresses to be natural, since those by whom it is not indulged, imagine that they give a proof of extraordinary fortitude, by suppressing it.

I am one of those who, with the Sancho of Cervantes, leave to higher characters the merit of suffering in silence, and give vent without scruple to any sorrow that swells in my heart. It is therefore to me a severe aggravation of a calamity, when it is such as in the common opinion will not justify the acerbity of exclamation, or support the solemnity of vocal grief. Yet many pains are incident to a man of delicacy, which the unfeeling world cannot be persuaded to pity, and which, when they are separated from their peculiar and personal circumstances, will never be considered as important enough to claim attention, or deserve redress.

Of this kind will appear, to gross and vulgar apprehensions, the miseries which I endured in a morning visit to Prospero, a man lately raised to wealth by a lucky project, and too much intoxicated by sudden elevation, or too little polished by thought and conversation, to enjoy his present fortune with elegance and decency.

We set out in the world together; and for a long time mutually assisted each other in our exigencies, as either happened to have money or influence beyond his immediate necessities. You know that nothing generally endears man so much as participation of dangers and misfortunes; I therefore always considered Prospero as united with me in the strongest league of kindness, and imagined that our friendship was only to be broken by the hand of death. I felt at his sudden shoot of success an honest and disinterested joy; but, as I want no part of his superfluities, am not willing to descend from that equality in which we hitherto have lived.

Our intimacy was regarded by me as a dispensation from ceremonial visits; and it was so long before I saw him at his new house, that he gently complained of my neglect, and obliged me to come on a day appointed. I kept my promise, but found that the impatience of my friend arose not from any desire to communicate his happiness, but to enjoy his superiority.

When I told my name at the door, the footman went to see if his master was at home, and, by the tardiness of his return, gave me reason to suspect that time was taken to deliberate. He then informed me that Prospero desired my company, and showed the staircase carefully secured by mats from the pollution of my feet. The best apartments were ostentatiously set open, that I might have a distant view of the magnificence which I was not permitted to approach; and my old friend, receiving me with all the insolence of condescension at the top of the stairs, conducted me to a back room, where he told me he always breakfasted when he had not great company.

On the floor where we sat, lay a carpet covered with a cloth, of which Prospero ordered his servant to lift up a corner, that I might contemplate the brightness of the colours, and the elegance of the texture, and asked me whether I had ever seen any thing so fine before. I did not gratify his folly with any outcries of admiration, but coldly bade the footman let down the cloth.

We then sat down, and I began to hope that pride was glutted with persecution, when Prospero desired that I would give the servant leave to adjust the cover of my chair, which was slipped a little aside, to show the damask; he informed me that he had bespoke ordinary chairs for common use, but had been disappointed by his tradesman. I put the chair aside with my foot, and drew another so hastily, that I was entreated not to rumple the carpet.

Breakfast was at last set; and as I was not willing to indulge the peevishness that began to seize me, I commended the tea. Prospero then told me, that another time I should taste his finest sort, but that he had only a very small quantity remaining, and reserved it for those whom he thought himself obliged to treat with particular respect.

While we were conversing upon such subjects, as imagination happened to suggest, he frequently digressed in directions to the servant that waited, or made a slight inquiry after the jeweller or silversmith; and once, as I was pursuing an argument with some degree of earnestness, he started from his posture of attention, and ordered that if Lord Lofty called on him that morning, he should be shown into the best parlour.

My patience was yet not wholly subdued. I was willing to promote his satisfaction, and therefore observed that the figures on the china were eminently pretty. Prospero had now an opportunity of calling for his Dresden china, which, says he, I always associate with my chased tea-kettle. The cups were brought; I once resolved not to have looked upon them, but my curiosity prevailed. When I had examined them a little, Prospero desired me to set them down, for they who were accustomed only to common dishes seldom handled china with much care. You will, I hope, commend my philosophy, when I tell you that I did not dash his baubles to the ground.

He was now so much elevated with his own greatness, that he thought some humility necessary to avert the glance of envy; and therefore told me with an air of soft composure, that I was not to estimate life by external appearance, that all these shining acquisitions had added little to his happiness, that he still remembered with pleasure the days in which he and I were upon the level, and had often, in the moment of reflection, been doubtful, whether he should lose much by changing his condition for mine.

I began now to be afraid lest his pride should, by silence and submission, be emboldened to insults that could not easily be borne, and therefore coolly considered how I should repress it without such bitterness of reproof as I was yet unwilling to use. But he interrupted my meditation, by asking leave to be dressed, and told me, that he had promised to attend some ladies in the park, and, if I was going the same way, would take me in his chariot. I had no inclination to any other favours, and therefore left him without any intention of seeing him again, unless some misfortune should restore his understanding.

I am, &c. ASPER.

Though I am not wholly insensible of the provocations which my correspondent has received, I cannot altogether commend the keenness of his resentment, nor encourage him to persist in his resolution of breaking off all commerce with his old acquaintance. One of the golden precepts of Pythagoras directs, that *a friend should not be hated for little faults:* and surely he, upon whom nothing worse can be charged, than that he mats his stairs, and covers his carpet, and sets

out his finery to show before those whom he does not admit to use it, has yet committed nothing that should exclude him from common degrees of kindness. Such improprieties often proceed rather from stupidity than malice. Those who thus shine only to dazzle, are influenced merely by custom and example, and neither examine, nor are qualified to examine, the motives of their own practice, or to state the nice limits between elegance and ostentation. They are often innocent of the pain which their vanity produces, and insult others when they have no worse purpose than to please themselves.

He that too much refines his delicacy will always endanger his quiet. Of those with whom nature and virtue oblige us to converse, some are ignorant of the arts of pleasing, and offend when they design to caress; some are negligent, and gratify themselves without regard to the quiet of another; some perhaps are malicious, and feel no greater satisfaction in prosperity than that of raising envy and trampling inferiority. But whatever be the motive of insult, it is always best to overlook it; for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect.*

No. 201.] TUESDAY, FEB. 18, 1752.

——Sanctus haberi,
Promissique tenax factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem. JUV.

Convince the world that you're devout and true;
Be just in all you say, and all you do;
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A peer of the first magnitude to me. STEPNEY.

BOYLE has observed, that the excellency of manufactures and the facility of labour would be much promoted, if the various expedients and contrivances which lie concealed in private hands, were by reciprocal communications made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which, though singly of little importance, would, by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge, and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellences distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall inquire after virtue with ardour and attention will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which as it is more or less cultivated, confers within its sphere of activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the subdivisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralist may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topics of praise and satire are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for his own improvement must not be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine singly in other men.

The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctuality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation, as of negligence and instability. This is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness or attention of wit, scarcely requisite among men of gayety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolic or a jest.

Every man has daily occasion to remark what vexations arise from this privilege of deceiving one another. The active and vivacious have so long disdained the restraints of truth, that promises and appointments have lost their cogency, and both parties neglect their stipulations, because each concludes that they will be broken by the other.

Negligence is first admitted in small affairs, and strengthened by petty indulgences. He that is not yet hardened by custom, ventures not on the violation of important engagements, but thinks himself bound by his word in cases of property or danger, though he allows himself to forget at what time he is to meet ladies in the park, or at what tavern his friends are expecting him.

This laxity of honour would be more tolerable, if it could be restrained to the play-house, the ball-room, or the card-table; yet even there it is sufficiently troublesome, and darkens those moments, with expectation, suspense, and resentment, which are set aside for pleasure, and from which we naturally hope for unmingled enjoyment and total relaxation. But he that suffers the slightest breach in his morality can seldom tell what shall enter it, or how wide it shall be made; when a passage is open, the influx of corruption is every moment wearing down opposition, and by slow degrees deluges the heart.

Aliger entered the world a youth of lively imagination, extensive views, and untainted principles. His curiosity incited him to range from place to place, and try all the varieties of conversation; his elegance of address and fertility of ideas gained him friends wherever he appeared; or at least he found the general kindness of reception always shown to a young man whose birth and fortune give him a claim to notice, and who has neither by vice or folly destroyed his privileges. Aliger was pleased with this general smile of mankind, and was industrious to preserve it by compliance and officiousness, but did not suffer his desire of pleasing to vitiate his integrity. It was his established maxim, that a promise is never to be broken; nor was it without long reluctance that he once suffered himself to be drawn away from a festal

* The character of Prospero, it is universally acknowledged, was intended for Garrick, who, says, Mr. Boswell, "never entirely forgave its pointed satire."—C.

engagement by the importunity of another company.

He spent the evening, as is usual, in the rudiments of vice, in perturbation and imperfect enjoyment, and met his disappointed friends in the morning with confusion and excuses. His companions, not accustomed to such scrupulous anxiety, laughed at his uneasiness, compounded the offence for a bottle, gave him courage to break his word again, and again levied the penalty. He ventured the same experiment upon another society, and found them equally ready to consider it as a venial fault, always incident to a man of quickness and gayety; till, by degrees, he began to think himself at liberty to follow the last invitation, and was no longer shocked at the turpitude of falsehood. He made no difficulty to promise his presence at distant places; and, if listlessness happened to creep upon him, would sit at home with great tranquillity, and has often sunk to sleep in a chair, while he held ten tables in continual expectations of his entrance.

It was so pleasant to live in perpetual vacancy, that he soon dismissed his attention as a useless incumbrance, and resigned himself to carelessness and dissipation, without any regard to the future or the past, or any other motive of action than the impulse of a sudden desire, or the attraction of immediate pleasure. The absent were immediately forgotten, and the hopes or fears felt by others had no influence upon his conduct. He was in speculation completely just, but never kept his promise to a creditor; he was benevolent, but always deceived those friends whom he undertook to patronize or assist; he was prudent, but suffered his affairs to be embarrassed for want of regulating his accounts at stated times. He courted a young lady, and, when the settlements were drawn, took a ramble into the country on the day appointed to sign them. He resolved to travel, and sent his chests on shipboard, but delayed to follow them till he lost his passage. He was summoned as an evidence in a cause of great importance, and loitered on the way till the trial was past. It is said that when he had, with great expense, formed an interest in a borough, his opponent contrived, by some agents who knew his temper, to lure him away on the day of election.

His benevolence draws him into the commission of a thousand crimes, which others less kind or civil would escape. His courtesy invites application; his promise produces dependance; he has his pockets filled with petitions, which he intends some time to deliver and enforce, and his table covered with letters of request, with which he purposes to comply; but time slips imperceptibly away, while he is either idle or busy; his friends lose their opportunities, and charge upon him their miscarriages and calamities.

This character, however contemptible, is not peculiar to Aliger. They whose activity of imagination is often shifting the scenes of expectation, are frequently subject to such sallies of caprice as make all their actions fortuitious, destroy the value of their friendship, obstruct the efficacy of their virtues, and set them below the meanest of those that persist in their resolutions, execute what they design, and perform what they have promised.

No. 202.] Saturday, Feb. 22, 1752.

Πρὸς ἅπαντα ἀειλὸς ἐστὶν ὁ πένης πράγματα,
αἱ πάντας αὐτοῦ καταφρονεῖν ὑπολαμβάνει.
Ὁ δὲ μετρίως πράττων περισκελέστερον
Ἅπαντα τ' ἀνιαρα, Δαμπρία, φέρει.

CALLIMACHUS.

From no affliction is the poor exempt;
He thinks each eye surveys him with contempt:
Unmauly poverty, subdues the heart,
Cankers each wound, and sharpens every dart.

F. LEWIS

Among those who have endeavoured to promote learning, and rectify judgment, it has been long customary to complain of the abuse of words, which are often admitted to signify things so different, that, instead of assisting the understanding as vehicles of knowledge, they produce error, dissension, and perplexity, because what is affirmed in one sense is received in another.

If this ambiguity sometimes embarrasses the most solemn controversies, and obscures the demonstrations of science, it may well be expected to infest the pompous periods of declaimers whose purpose is often only to amuse with fallacies, and change the colours of truth and falsehood; or the musical compositions of poets, whose style is professedly figurative, and whose art is imagined to consist in distorting words from their original meaning.

There are few words of which the reader believes himself better to know the import than of *poverty;* yet, whoever studies either the poets or philosophers, will find such an account of the condition expressed by that term as his experience or observation will not easily discover to be true. Instead of the meanness, distress, complaint, anxiety, and dependence, which have hitherto been combined in his ideas of poverty, he will read of content, innocence, and cheerfulness, of health and safety, tranquillity, and freedom; of pleasures not known but to men unincumbered with possessions; and of sleep that sheds his balsamic anodynes only on the cottage. Such are the blessings to be obtained by the resignation of riches, that kings might descend from their thrones, and generals retire from a triumph, only to slumber, undisturbed in the elysium of poverty.

If these authors do not deceive us, nothing can be more absurd than that perpetual contest for wealth which keeps the world in commotion; nor any complaints more justly censured than those which proceed from want of the gifts of fortune, which we are taught by the great masters of moral wisdom to consider as golden shackles, by which the wearer is at once disabled and adorned; as luscious poisons, which may for a time please the palate, but soon betray their malignity by languor and by pain.

It is the great privilege of poverty to be happy unenvied, to be healthful without physic, and secure without a guard; to obtain from the bounty of nature what the great and wealthy are compelled to procure by the help of artists and attendants, of flatterers and spies.

But it will be found, upon a nearer view, that they who extol the happiness of poverty do not mean the same state with those who deplore its miseries. Poets have their imaginations filled with ideas of magnificence; and being accustomed to contemplate the downfal of empires, or to con-

trive forms of lamentations for monarchs in distress, rank all the classes of mankind in a state of poverty who make no approaches to the dignity of crowns. To be poor in the epic language is only not to command the wealth of nations, nor to have fleets and armies in pay.

Vanity has perhaps contributed to this impropriety of style. He that wishes to become a philosopher at a cheap rate, easily gratifies his ambition by submitting to poverty when he does not feel it, and by boasting his contempt of riches when he has already more than he enjoys. He who would show the extent of his views, and grandeur of his conceptions, or discover his acquaintance with splendour and magnificence, may talk, like Cowley, of an humble station and quiet obscurity, of the paucity of nature's wants, and the inconveniences of superfluity, and at last, like him, limit his desires to five hundred pounds a year; a fortune, indeed, not exuberant, when we compare it with the expenses of pride and luxury, but to which it little becomes a philosopher to affix the name of poverty, since no man can, with any propriety, be termed poor, who does not see the greater part of mankind richer than himself.

As little is the general condition of human life understood by the panegyrists and historians, who amuse us with accounts of the poverty of heroes and sages. Riches are of no value in themselves, their use is discovered only in that which they procure. They are not coveted, unless by narrow understandings, which confound the means with the end, but for the sake of power, influence, and esteem; or, by some of less elevated and refined sentiments, as necessary to sensual enjoyment.

The pleasures of luxury many have, without uncommon virtue, been able to despise, even when affluence and idleness have concurred to tempt them; and therefore he who feels nothing from indigence but the want of gratifications which he could not in any other condition make consistent with innocence, has given no proof of eminent patience. Esteem and influence every man desires, but they are equally pleasing, and equally valuable, by whatever means they are obtained; and whoever has found the art of securing them without the help of money, ought, in reality, to be accounted rich, since he has all that riches can purchase to a wise man. Cincinnatus, though he lived upon a few acres cultivated by his own hand, was sufficiently removed from all the evils generally comprehended under the name of poverty, when his reputation was such, that the voice of his country called him from his farm to take absolute command into his hand; nor was Diogenes much mortified by his residence in a tub, where he was honoured with the visit of Alexander the Great.

The same fallacy has conciliated veneration to the religious orders. When we behold a man abdicating the hope of terrestrial possessions, and precluding himself, by an irrevocable vow, from the pursuit and acquisition of all that his fellow-beings consider as worthy of wishes and endeavours, we are immediately struck with the purity, abstraction, and firmness of his mind, and regard him as wholly employed in securing the interests of futurity, and devoid of any other care than to gain at whatever price the surest passage to eternal rest.

Yet, what can the votary be justly said to have lost of his present happiness? If he resides in a convent, he converses only with men whose condition is the same with his own; he has, from the munificence of the founder, all the necessaries of life, and is safe from that *destitution, which* Hooker declares to be *such an impediment to virtue, as, till it be removed, suffereth not the mind of man to admit any other care.* All temptations to envy and competition are shut out from his retreat; he is not pained with the sight of unattainable dignity, nor insulted with the bluster of insolence, or the smile of forced familiarity. If he wanders abroad, the sanctity of his character amply compensates all other distinctions; he is seldom seen but with reverence, nor heard but with submission.

It has been remarked, that death, though often defied in the field, seldom fails to terrify when it approaches the bed of sickness in its natural horror; so poverty may easily be endured while associated with dignity and reputation, but will always be shunned and dreaded when it is accompanied with ignominy and contempt.

No. 203.] TUESDAY, FEB. 25, 1752.

Cum volet illa dies, quæ nil nisi corporis hujus
Jus habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat ævi. OVID.

Come, soon or late, death's undetermined day,
This mortal being only can decay. WELSTED.

IT seems to be the fate of man to seek all his consolations in futurity. The time present is seldom able to fill desire or imagination with immediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supply its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.

Every one has so often detected the fallaciousness of hope, and the inconvenience of teaching himself to expect what a thousand accidents may preclude, that, when time has abated the confidence with which youth rushes out to take possession of the world, we endeavour, or wish, to find entertainment in the review of life, and to repose upon real facts and certain experience. This is perhaps one reason, among many, why age delights in narratives.

But so full is the world of calamity, that every source of pleasure is polluted, and every retirement of tranquillity disturbed. When time has supplied us with events sufficient to employ our thoughts, it has mingled them with so many disasters, that we shrink from their remembrance, dread their intrusion upon our minds, and fly from them as from enemies that pursue us with torture.

No man past the middle point of life can sit down to feast upon the pleasures of youth without finding the banquet embittered by the cup of sorrow; he may revive lucky accidents and pleasing extravagances; many days of harmless frolic, or nights of honest festivity, will perhaps recur; or, if he has been engaged in scenes of action and acquainted with affairs of difficulty and vicissitudes of fortune, he may enjoy the nobler pleasure of looking back upon distress firmly supported, dangers resolutely encountered, and opposition artfully defeated. Æneas properly comforts his companions, when, after the horrors of a storm, they have landed on an unknown and desolate country, with the hope that their miseries

will be at some distant time recounted with delight. There are few higher gratifications than that of reflection on surmounted evils, when they were not incurred nor protracted by our fault, and neither reproach us with cowardice nor guilt.

But this felicity is almost always abated by the reflection, that they with whom we should be most pleased to share it are now in the grave. A few years make such havoc in human generations, that we soon see ourselves deprived of those with whom we entered the world, and whom the participation of pleasures or fatigues had endeared to our remembrance. The man of enterprise recounts his adventures and expedients, but is forced at the close of the relation to pay a sigh to the names of those that contributed to his success; he that passes his life among the gayer part of mankind, has his remembrance stored with remarks and repartees of wits, whose sprightliness and merriment are now lost in perpetual silence; the trader, whose industry has supplied the want of inheritance, repines in solitary plenty at the absence of companions with whom he had planned out amusements for his latter years; and the scholar, whose merit, after a long series of efforts, raises him from obscurity, looks round in vain from his exaltation for his old friends or enemies, whose applause or mortification would heighten his triumph.

Among Martial's requisites to happiness is, *Res non parta labore, sed relicta*, An estate not gained by industry, but left by inheritance. It is necessary to the completion of every good, that it be timely obtained for whatever comes at the close of life will come too late to give much delight. Yet all human happiness has its defects; of what we do not gain for ourselves we have only a faint and imperfect fruition, because we cannot compare the difference between want and possession, or at least can derive from it no conviction of our own abilities, nor any increase of self-esteem. What we acquire by bravery or science, by mental or corporal diligence; comes at last when we cannot communicate, and therefore cannot enjoy it.

Thus every period of life is obliged to borrow its happiness from the time to come. In youth we have nothing past to entertain us, and in age we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow. Yet the future likewise has its limits, which the imagination dreads to approach, but which we see to be not far distant. The loss of our friends and companions impresses hourly upon us the necessity of our own departure; we know that the schemes of man are quickly at an end, that we must soon lie down in the grave with the forgotten multitudes of former ages, and yield our place to others, who, like us, shall be driven a while, by hope or fear, about the surface of the earth, and then like us be lost in the shades of death.

Beyond this termination of our material existence we are therefore obliged to extend our hopes; and almost every man indulges his imagination with something, which is not to happen till he has changed his manner of being: some amuse themselves with entails and settlements, provide for the perpetuation of families and honours, or contrive to obviate the dissipation of the fortunes which it has been their business to accumulate; others, more refined or exalted, congratulate their own hearts upon the future extent of their reputation, the reverence of distant nations, and the gratitude of unprejudiced posterity.

They whose souls are so chained down to coffers and tenements, that they cannot conceive a state in which they shall look upon them with less solicitude, are seldom attentive or flexible to arguments; but the votaries of fame are capable of reflection, and therefore may be called to reconsider the probability of their expectations.

Whether to be remembered in remote times be worthy of a wise man's wish, has not yet been satisfactorily decided; and indeed, to be long remembered, can happen to so small a number, that the bulk of mankind has very little interest in the question. There is never room in the world for more than a certain quantity or measure of renown. The necessary business of life, the immediate pleasures or pains of every condition, leave us not leisure beyond a fixed portion for contemplations which do not forcibly influence our present welfare. When this vacuity is filled, no characters can be admitted into the circulation of fame, but by occupying the place of some that must be thrust into oblivion. The eye of the mind, like that of the body, can only extend its view to new objects, by losing sight of those which are now before it.

Reputation is therefore a meteor, which blazes awhile and disappears for ever; and, if we except a few transcendent and invincible names, which no revolutions of opinion or length of time is able to suppress; all those that engage our thoughts, or diversify our conversation, are every moment hasting to obscurity, as new favourites are adopted by fashion.

It is not therefore from this world that any ray of comfort can proceed, to cheer the gloom of the last hour. But futurity has still its prospects; there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease, and the languor of decay. This happiness we may expect with confidence, because it is out of the power of chance, and may be attained by all that sincerely desire and earnestly pursue it. On this therefore every mind ought finally to rest. Hope is the chief blessing of man, and that hope only is rational, of which we are certain that it cannot deceive us.

No. 204.] SATURDAY, FEB. 29, 1752.

Nemo tam divos habuit faventes,
Crastinum ut possit sibi polliceri. SENECA.

Of Heaven's protection who can be
So confident to utter this—?
To-morrow I will spend in bliss. F. LEWIS

SEGED, lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world: To the sons of *presumption*, humility and fear; and to the daughters of *sorrow*, content and acquiesence,

Thus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the distributor of the waters of the Nile: "At length, Seged, thy toils are at an end; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thy enemies. All who have offended thee tremble in thy pre-

sence, and wherever thy voice is heard it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasuries overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod is as the earthquake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of millions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign gives the day to festivity, and the night to peace? At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is the gift of conquest but safety? Why are riches collected but to purchase happiness?"

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built in an island of the lake of Dambea, to be prepared for his reception. "I will retire," says he, "for ten days from tumult and care, from counsels and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governors of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert, or abate the sweetness of the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish unsatisfied."

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hasted to the palace of Dambea, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden, were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains, for repose at noon. All that could solace the sense, or flatter the fancy, all that industry could extort from nature, or wealth furnish to art, all that conquest could seize, or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed: the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them; their passage was cheered with music, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged, landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent, to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity, and then fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber, to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom to call, since he could not enjoy one but by delaying the performance of another. He chose and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harassed, and his thoughts confused: then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended; for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind; one thought flowed in upon another; a long succession of images seized his attention; the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted up his head, and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. "Such," said Seged, sighing, "is the longest day of human existence: before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end."

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening; and after having endeavoured, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gayety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to defer his hopes to the next morning, and lay down to partake with the slaves of labour and poverty the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gate of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with dejected countenance, or utter any expression of discontent or sorrow, should be driven for ever from the palace of Dambea.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court and bower of the gardens. Mirth was frighted away; and they who were before dancing in the lawns, or singing in the shades, were at once engaged in the care of regulating their looks, that Seged might find his will punctually obeyed, and see none among them liable to banishment.

Seged now met every face settled in a smile, but a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity, and constraint. He accosted his favourites with familiarity and softness; but they durst not speak without premeditation, lest they should be convicted of discontent or sorrow. He proposed diversions, to which no objection was made, because objection would have implied uneasiness; but they were regarded with indifference by the courtiers, who had no other desire than to signalize themselves by clamorous exultation. He offered various topics of conversation; but obtained only forced jests and laborious laughter; and, after many attempts to animate his train to confidence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to himself the impotence of command, and resign another day to grief and disappointment.

He at last relieved his companions from their terrors, and shut himself up in his chamber to ascertain, by different measures, the felicity of the succeeding days. At length he threw him-

self on the bed, and closed his eyes, but imagined, in his sleep, that his palace and gardens were overwhelmed by an inundation, and waked with all the terrors of a man struggling in the water. He composed himself again to rest, but was affrighted by an imaginary irruption into his kingdom; and striving, as is usual in dreams, without ability to move, fancied himself betrayed to his enemies, and again started up with horror and indignation.

It was now day, and fear was so strongly impressed on his mind, that he could sleep no more. He rose; but his thoughts were filled with the deluge and invasion, nor was he able to disengage his attention, or mingle with vacancy and ease in any amusement. At length his perturbation gave way to reason, and he resolved no longer to be harassed by visionary miseries; but before this resolution could be completed, half the day had elapsed. He felt a new conviction of the uncertainty of human schemes, and could not forbear to bewail the weakness of that being, whose quiet was to be interrupted by vapours of the fancy. Having been first disturbed by a dream, he afterwards grieved that a dream could disturb him. He at last discovered that his terrors and grief were equally vain, and that to lose the present in lamenting the past was voluntarily to protract a melancholy vision. The third day was now declining, and Seged again resolved to be happy on the morrow.

No. 205.] TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 1752.

——Volat ambiguis
Mobilis alis hora, nec ulli
Præstat velox fortuna fidem. SENECA.

On fickle wings the minutes haste,
And fortune's favours never last. F. LEWIS.

ON the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden, attended by the princess and ladies of his court, and, seeing nothing about but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart, "This day shall be a day of pleasure." The sun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment, and sometimes uttered grave reflections and sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation, or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sight of happiness conferred by himself filled his heart with satisfaction: but having passed three hours in this harmless luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by a universal scream among the women, and, turning back, saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation, as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into the lake, but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terror which had seized upon them. The princesses inclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment than to contemplate the innumerable casualties which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed by his own fault, and that the accident which had blasted the hopes of the day might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found that discontent and melancholy were not to be frighted away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He therefore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantry, by proposing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the antichamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperor. But when Seged entered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found that any passion too strongly agitated puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth, and that the mind that is to be moved by the gentle ventilations of gayety must be first smoothed by a total calm. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we must, in the same degree, be afraid to lose, and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken, but with so visible an endeavour at perfection, as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration: and Seged could not but observe with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached, the contest grew more earnest, and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day; for considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice the prizes which had been so zealously sought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt, in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors.

At last, knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint, and thinking that, on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow, he declared that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes, were

not pleased to be levelled with the crowd; and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. "Behold here," said Seged, "the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others." He then retired to meditate, and, while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please and be pleased his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacence through the whole court, and the emperor imagined that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone: 'What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him? a man whom, whatever he may have formerly performed, his luxury now shows to have the same weakness with ourselves!" This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most abject of his flatterers. At first his indignation prompted him to severity; but reflecting, that what was spoken without intention to be heard was to be considered as only thought, and was, perhaps, but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy; and after the struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of this clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day, and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, till, looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollected that under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his disnonour, and the miseries which his subjects suffered from the invader, filled him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasure; when his tranquillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having in vain tried to pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eighth morning Seged was awakened early by an unusual hurry in the apartments, and, inquiring the cause, was told that the princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and, calling the physicians, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity; all his thoughts were now upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ehtiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war, and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say, "This day shall be a day of happiness."

No. 206.] SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1752

——Propositi nondum pudet, atque eadem est mens,
Ut bona summa putes, aliena vivere quadra. JUV.

But harden'd by affronts, and still the same,
Lost to all sense of honour and of fame,
Thou yet canst love to haunt the great man's board,
And think no supper good but with a lord. BOWLES.

WHEN Diogenes was once asked, what kind of wine he liked best, he answered, "That which is drunk at the cost of others."

Though the character of Diogenes has never excited any general zeal of imitation, there are many who resemble him in his taste of wine; many who are frugal, though not abstemious; whose appetites, though too powerful for reason, are kept under restraint by avarice; and to whom all delicacies lose their flavour, when they cannot be obtained but at their own expense.

Nothing produces more singularity of manners, and inconstancy of life, than the conflict of opposite vices in the same mind. He that uniformly pursues any purpose, whether good or bad, has a settled principle of action; and, as he may always find associates who are travelling the same way, is countenanced by example, and sheltered in the multitude; but a man actuated at once by different desires must move in a direction peculiar to himself, and suffer that reproach which we are naturally inclined to bestow on those who deviate from the rest of the world, even without inquiring whether they are worse or better.

Yet this conflict of desires sometimes produces wonderful efforts. To riot in far-fetched dishes, or surfeit with unexhausted variety, and yet practise the most rigid economy, is surely an art which may justly draw the eyes of mankind upon them whose industry or judgment has enabled them to attain it. To him, indeed, who is content to break open the chests, or mortgage the manors of his ancestors, that he may hire the ministers of excess at the highest price, glutony is an easy science; yet we often hear the votaries of luxury boasting of the elegance which they owe to the taste of others; relating with rapture the succession of dishes with which their cooks and caterers supply them; and expecting their share of praise with the discoverers of arts, and the civilizers of nations. But to shorten the way to convivial happiness, by eating without cost, is a secret hitherto in few hands, but which certainly deserves the curiosity of those whose principal employment is their dinner, and who see the sun rise with no other hope than that they shall fill their bellies before it sets.

Of them that have within my knowledge attempted this scheme of happiness, the greater part have been immediately obliged to desist; and some, whom their first attempts flattered with success, were reduced by degrees to a few tables, from which they were at last chased to make way for others; and, having long habituated themselves to superfluous plenty, growled

away their latter years in discontented competence.

None enter the regions of luxury with higher expectations than men of wit, who imagine that they shall never want a welcome to that company whose ideas they can enlarge, or whose imaginations they can elevate, and believe themselves able to pay for their wine with the mirth which it qualifies them to produce. Full of this opinion, they crowd with little invitation wherever the smell of a feast allures them, but are seldom encouraged to repeat their visits, being dreaded by the pert as rivals, and hated by the dull as disturbers of the company.

No man has been so happy in gaining and keeping the privilege of living at luxurious houses as Gulosulus, who, after thirty years of continual revelry, has now established, by uncontroverted prescription, his claim to partake of every entertainment, and whose presence they who aspire to the praise of a sumptuous table are careful to procure on a day of importance, by sending the invitation a fortnight before.

Gulosulus entered the world without any eminent degree of merit; but was careful to frequent houses where persons of rank resorted. By being often seen, he became in time known; and, from sitting in the same room, was suffered to mix in idle conversation, or assisted to fill up a vacant hour, when better amusement was not readily to be had. From the coffee-house he was sometimes taken away to dinner; and, as no man refuses the acquaintance of him whom he sees admitted to familiarity by others of equal dignity, when he had been met at a few tables, he with less difficulty found the way to more, till at last he was regularly expected to appear wherever preparations are made for a feast, within the circuit of his acquaintance.

When he was thus by accident initiated in luxury, he felt in himself no inclination to retire from a life of so much pleasure, and therefore very seriously considered how he might continue it. Great qualities or uncommon accomplishments he did not find necessary; for he had already seen that merit rather enforces respect than attracts fondness; and as he thought no folly greater than that of losing a dinner for any other gratification, he often congratulated himself, that he had none of that disgusting excellence which impresses awe upon greatness, and condemns its possessors to the society of those who are wise or brave, and indigent as themselves.

Gulosulus, having never allotted much of his time to books or meditation, had no opinion in philosophy or politics, and was not in danger of injuring his interest by dogmatical positions, or violent contradiction. If a dispute arose, he took care to listen with earnest attention; and, when either speaker grew vehement and loud, turned towards him with eager quickness, and uttered a short phrase of admiration, as if surprised by such cogency of argument as he had never known before. By this silent concession, he generally preserved in either controvertist such a conviction of his own superiority, as inclined him rather to pity than irritate his adversary, and prevented those outrages which are sometimes produced by the rage of defeat or petulance of triumph.

Gulosulus was never embarrassed but when he was required to declare his sentiments before he had been able to discover to which side the master of the house inclined; for it was his invariable rule to adopt the notions of those that invited him.

It will sometimes happen that the insolence of wealth breaks into contemptuousness, or the turbulence of wine requires a vent; and Gulosulus seldom fails of being singled out on such emergencies, as one on whom any experiment of ribaldry may be safely tried. Sometimes his lordship finds himself inclined to exhibit a specimen of raillery, for the diversion of his guests, and Gulosulus always supplies him with a subject of merriment. But he has learned to consider rudeness and indignities as familiarities that entitle him to greater freedom: he comforts himself that those who treat and insult him pay for their laughter, and that he keeps his money while they enjoy their jest.

His chief policy consists in selecting some dish from every course, and recommending it to the company, with an air so decisive, that no one ventures to contradict him. By this practice he acquires at a feast a kind of dictatorial authority; his taste becomes the standard of pickles and seasoning, and he is venerated by the professors of epicurism, as the only man who understands the niceties of cookery.

Whenever a new sauce is imported, or any innovation made in the culinary system, he procures the earliest intelligence, and the most authentic receipt; and, by communicating his knowledge under proper injunctions of secrecy, gains a right of tasting his own dish whenever it is prepared, that he may tell whether his directions have been fully understood.

By this method of life Gulosulus has so impressed on his imagination the dignity of feasting, that he has no other topic of talk or subject of meditation. His calendar is a bill of fare; he measures the year by successive dainties. The only common places of his memory are his meals; and if you ask him at what time an event happened, he considers whether he heard it after a dinner of turbot or venison. He knows, indeed, that those who value themselves upon sense, learning, or piety, speak of him with contempt; but he considers them as wretches, envious or ignorant, who do not know his happiness, or wish to supplant him; and declares to his friends, that he is fully satisfied with his own conduct, since he has fed every day on twenty dishes, and yet doubled his estate.

No. 207.] Tuesday, March 10, 1752.

Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus. HOR.

The voice of reason cries with winning force,
Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest, in the race derided, left behind,
He drag his jaded limbs and burst his wind. FRANCIS

Such is the emptiness of human enjoyment, that we are always impatient of the present. Attainment is followed by neglect, and possession by disgust; and the malicious remark of

the Greek epigrammatist on marriage may be applied to every other course of life, that its two days of happiness are the first and the last.

Few moments are more pleasing than those in which the mind is concerting measures for a new undertaking. From the first hint that wakens the fancy till the hour of actual execution, all is improvement and progress, triumph and felicity. Every hour brings additions to the original scheme, suggests some new expedient to secure success, or discovers consequential advantages not hitherto foreseen. While preparations are made, and materials accumulated, day glides after day through elysian prospects, and the heart dances to the song of hope.

Such is the pleasure of projecting, that many content themselves with a succession of visionary schemes, and wear out their allotted time in the calm amusement of contriving what they never attempt or hope to execute.

Others, not able to feast their imagination with pure ideas, advance somewhat nearer to the grossness of action, with great diligence collect whatever is requisite to their design, and, after a thousand researches and consultations, are snatched away by death, as they stand *in procinctu* waiting for a proper opportunity to begin.

If there were no other end of life, than to find some adequate solace for every day, I know not whether any condition could be preferred to that of the man who involves himself in his own thoughts, and never suffers experience to show him the vanity of speculation; for no sooner are notions reduced to practice, than tranquillity and confidence forsake the breast; every day brings its task, and often without bringing abilities to perform it; difficulties embarrass, uncertainty perplexes, opposition retards, censure exasperates, or neglect depresses. We proceed because we have begun; we complete our design that the labour already spent may not be vain; but, as expectation gradually dies away, the gay smile of alacrity disappears, we are compelled to implore severer powers, and trust the event to patience and constancy.

When once our labour has begun, the comfort that enables us to endure it is the prospect of its end; for though in every long work there are some joyous intervals of self-applause, when the attention is recreated by unexpected facility, and the imagination soothed by incidental excellences; yet the toil with which performance struggles after idea is so irksome and disgusting, and so frequent is the necessity of resting below that perfection which we imagined within our reach, that seldom any man obtains more from his endeavours than a painful conviction of his defects, and a continual resuscitation of desires which he feels himself unable to gratify.

So certainly is weariness the concomitant of our undertakings, that every man, in whatever he is engaged, consoles himself with the hope of change; if he has made his way by assiduity to public employment, he talks among his friends of the delight of retreat; if, by the necessity of solitary application, he is secluded from the world, he listens with a beating heart to distant noises, longs to mingle with living beings, and resolves to take hereafter his fill of diversions, or display his abilities on the universal theatre, and enjoy the pleasure of distinction and applause.

Every desire, however innocent, grows dangerous, as by long indulgence it becomes ascendant in the mind. When we have been much accustomed to consider any thing as capable of giving happiness, it is not easy to restrain our ardour, or to forbear some precipitation in our advances, and irregularity in our pursuits. He that has cultivated the tree, watched the swelling bud and opening blossom, and pleased himself with computing how much every sun and shower add to its growth, scarcely stays till the fruit has obtained its maturity, but defeats his own cares by eagerness to reward them. When we have diligently laboured for any purpose, we are willing to believe that we have attained it, and because we have already done much, too suddenly conclude that no more is to be done.

All attraction is increased by the approach of the attracting body. We never find ourselves so desirous to finish, as in the latter part of our work, or so impatient of delay, as when we know that delay cannot be long. This unseasonable importunity of discontent may be partly imputed to languor and weariness, which must always oppress those more whose toil has been longer continued; but the greater part usually proceeds from frequent contemplation of that ease which is now considered as within reach, and which, when it has once flattered our hopes, we cannot suffer to be withheld.

In some of the noblest compositions of wit, the conclusion falls below the vigour and spirit of the first books; and as a genius is not to be degraded by the imputation of human failings, the cause of this declension is commonly sought in the structure of the work, and plausible reasons are given why in the defective part less ornament was necessary, or less could be admitted. But, perhaps, the author would have confessed, that his fancy was tired, and his perseverance broken; that he knew his design to be unfinished, but that, when he saw the end so near, he could no longer refuse to be at rest.

Against the instillations of this frigid opiate, the heart should be secured by all the considerations which once concurred to kindle the ardour of enterprise. Whatever motive first incited action, has still greater force to stimulate perseverance; since he that might have lain still at first in blameless obscurity, cannot afterwards desist but with infamy and reproach. He whom a doubtful promise of distant good could encourage to set difficulties at defiance, ought not to remit his vigour when he has almost obtained his recompense. To faint or loiter, when only the last efforts are required, is to steer the ship through tempests, and abandon it to the winds in sight of land; it is to break the ground and scatter the seed, and at last to neglect the harvest.

The masters of rhetoric direct, that the most forcible arguments be produced in the latter part of an oration, lest they should be effaced or perplexed by supervenient images. This precept may be justly extended to the series of life: nothing is ended with honour, which does not conclude better than it began. It is not sufficient to maintain the first vigour; for excellence loses its effect upon the mind by custom, as light

after a time ceases to dazzle. Admiration must be continued by that novelty which first produced it, and how much soever is given, there must always be reason to imagine that more remains.

We not only are most sensible of the last impressions; but such is the unwillingness of mankind to admit transcendant merit, that though it be difficult to obliterate the reproach of miscarriages by any subsequent achievement, however illustrious, yet the reputation raised by a long train of success may be finally ruined by a single failure; for weakness or error will be always remembered by that malice and envy which it gratifics.

For the prevention of that disgrace, which lassitude and negligence may bring at last upon the greatest performances, it is necessary to proportion carefully our labour to our strength. If the design comprises many parts, equally essential, and therefore not to be separated, the only time for caution is before we engage; the powers of the mind must be then impartially estimated, and it must be remembered, that not to complete the plan is not to have begun it; and that nothing is done, while any thing is omitted.

But if the task consists in the repetition of single acts, no one of which derives its efficacy from the rest, it may be attempted with less scruple, because there is always opportunity to retreat with honour. The danger is only, lest we expect from the world the indulgence with which most are disposed to treat themselves; and in the hour of listlessness imagine that the diligence of one day will atone for the idleness of another, and that applause begun by approbation will be continued by habit.

He that is himself weary will soon weary the public. Let him therefore lay down his employment, whatever it be, who can no longer exert his former activity or attention; let him not endeavour to struggle with censure, or obstinately infest the stage till a general hiss commands him to depart.

No. 208.] Saturday, March 14, 1752.

Ἡράκλειτος ἐγώ· τί με ὦ κάτω ἕλκετ' ἄμουσοι;
Οὐχ' ὑμῖν ἐπόνουν, τοις δέ μ' ἐπισταμένοις·
Εἷς ἐμοὶ ἄνθρωπος τρισμύριοι· οἱ δ' ἀναρίθμοι
Οὐδείς· ταῦτ' αὐδῶ καὶ παρὰ Περσεφόνῃ.

DIOG. LAERT.

Begone, ye blockheads, Heraclitus cries,
And leave my labours to the learn'd and wise;
By wit, by knowledge, studious to be read,
I scorn the multitude, alive and dead.

Time, which puts an end to all human pleasures and sorrows, has likewise concluded the labours of the Rambler. Having supported, for two years, the anxious employment of a periodical writer, and multiplied my essays to upwards of two hundred, I have now determined to desist.

The reasons of this resolution it is of little importance to declare, since justification is unnecessary when no objection is made. I am far from supposing that the cessation of my performances will raise any inquiry, for I have never been much a favourite of the public, nor can boast that, in the progress of my undertaking I have been animated by the rewards of the liberal, the caresses of the great, or the praises of the eminent.

But I have no design to gratify pride by submission, or malice by lamentation; nor think it reasonable to complain of neglect from those whose regard I never solicited. If I have not been distinguished by the distributors of literary honours, I have seldom descended to the arts by which favour is obtained. I have seen the meteors of fashion rise and fall, without any attempt to add a moment to their duration. I have never complied with temporary curiosity, nor enabled my readers to discuss the topic of the day; I have rarely exemplified my assertions by living characters: in my papers, no man could look for censures of his enemies, or praises of himself; and they only were expected to peruse them, whose passions left them leisure for abstracted truth, and whom virtue could please by its naked dignity.

To some, however, I am indebted for encouragement, and to others for assistance. The number of my friends was never great, but they have been such as would not suffer me to think that I was writing in vain, and I did not feel much dejection from the want of popularity.

My obligations having not been frequent, my acknowledgments may be soon despatched. I can restore to all my correspondents their productions, with little diminution of the bulk of my volumes, though not without the loss of some pieces to which particular honours have been paid.

The parts from which I claim no other praise than that of having given them an opportunity of appearing, are the four billets in the tenth paper, the second letter in the fifteenth, the thirtieth, the forty-fourth, the ninety-seventh, and the hundredth papers, and the second letter in the hundred and seventh.

Having thus deprived myself of many excuses which candour might have admitted for the inequality of my compositions, being no longer able to allege the necessity of gratifying correspondents, the importunity with which publication was solicited, or obstinacy with which correction was rejected, I must remain accountable for all my faults, and submit, without subterfuge, to the censures of criticism, which, however, I shall not endeavour to soften by a formal deprecation, or to overbear by the influence of a patron. The supplications of an author never yet reprieved him a moment from oblivion; and, though greatness has sometimes sheltered guilt, it can afford no protection to ignorance or dulness. Having hitherto attempted only the propagation of truth, I will not at last violate it by the confession of terrors which I do not feel; having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication.

The seeming vanity with which I have sometimes spoken of myself, would perhaps require an apology, were it not extenuated by the example of those who have published essays before me, and by the privilege which every nameless writer has been hitherto allowed. "A mask," says Castiglione, "confers a right of acting and speaking with less restraint, even when the wearer happens to be known." He that is discovered without his own consent, may claim some indulgence, and cannot be rigorously called

to justify those sallies or frolics which his disguise must prove him desirous to conceal.

But I have been cautious lest this offence should be frequently or grossly committed; for, as one of the philosophers directs us to live with a friend, as with one that is some time to become an enemy. I have always thought it the duty of an anonymous author to write, as if he expected to be hereafter known.

I am willing to flatter myself with hopes that, by collecting these papers I am not preparing, for my future life, either shame or repentance. That all are happily imagined, or accurately polished, that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant. He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce.

Whatever shall be the final sentence of mankind, I have at least endeavoured to deserve their kindness. I have laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations. Something, perhaps, I have added to the elegance of its construction, and something to the harmony of its cadence. When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarised the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted any word not authorised by former writers; for I believe that whoever knows the English tongue in its present extent, will be able to express his thoughts without farther help from other nations.

As it has been my principal design to inculcate wisdom or piety, I have allotted a few papers to the idle sports of imagination. Some, perhaps, may be found, of which the highest excellence is harmless merriment, but scarcely any man is so steadily serious as not to complain, that the severity of dictatorial instruction has been too seldom relieved, and that he is driven by the sternness of the Rambler's philosophy to more cheerful and airy companions.

Next to the excursions of fancy are the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts. Arbitrary decision and general exclamation I have carefully avoided, by asserting nothing without a reason, and establishing all my principles of judgment on unalterable and evident truth.

In the pictures of life I have never been so studious of novelty or surprise, as to depart wholly from all resemblance; a fault which writers deservedly celebrated frequently commit, that they may raise, as the occasion requires, either mirth or abhorrence. Some enlargement may be allowed to declamation, and some exaggeration to burlesque; but as they deviate further from reality, they become less useful, because their lessons will fail of application. The mind of the reader is carried away from the contemplation of his own manners; he finds in himself no likeness to the phantom before him; and, though he laughs or rages, is not reformed.

The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man can diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers, who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.

Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀνταξιος εἴη ἀμοιβή.

Celestial powers; that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward

END OF THE RAMBLER.

PAPERS IN THE ADVENTURER.

No. 34.] SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1753.

Has toties optata exegit gloria pœnas. JUV.

Such fate pursues the votaries of praise.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Fleet Prison, Feb. 24.

SIR,

To a benevolent disposition, every state of life will afford some opportunities of contributing to the welfare of mankind. Opulence and splendour are enabled to dispel the cloud of adversity, to dry up the tears of the widow and the orphan, and to increase the felicity of all around them; their example will animate virtue, and retard the progress of vice. And even indigence and obscurity, though without power to confer happiness, may at least prevent misery, and apprize those who are blinded by their passions, that they are on the brink of irremediable calamity.

Pleased, therefore, with the thought of recovering others from that folly which has embittered my own days, I have presumed to address the Adventurer from the dreary mansions of wretchedness and despair, of which the gates are so wonderfully constructed as to fly open for the reception of strangers, though they are impervious as a rock of adamant to such as are within them:

——Facilis descensus Averni;
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est. VIRG.

The gates of Hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way:
But to return and view the cheerful skies;
In this the task and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Suffer me to acquaint you, Sir, that I have glittered at the ball, and sparkled in the circle; that I have had the happiness to be the unknown favourite of an unknown lady at the masquerade, have been the delight of tables of the first fashion, and envy of my brother beaux; and to descend a little lower, it is, I believe, still remembered, that Messrs. Velours and d'Espagne stand indebted for a great part of their present influence at Guildhall, to the elegance of my shape, and the graceful freedom of my carriage.

——Sed quæ præclara et prospera tanti,
Ut rebus lætis par sit mensura malorum! JUV.

See the wild purchase of the bold and vain,
Where every bliss is bought with equal pain!

As I entered into the world very young, with an elegant person and a large estate, it was not long before I disentangled myself from the shackles of religion; for I was determined to the pursuit of pleasure, which, according to my notions, consisted in the unrestrained and unlimited gratifications of every passion and every appetite; and as this could not be obtained under the frowns of a perpetual dictator, I considered religion as my enemy; and proceeding to treat her with contempt and derision, was not a little delighted, that the unfashionableness of her appearance, and the unanimated uniformity of her motions, afforded frequent opportunities for the sallies of my imagination.

Conceiving now that I was sufficiently qualified to laugh away scruples, I imparted my remarks to those among my female favourites, whose virtue I intended to attack; for I was well assured, that pride would be able to make but a weak defence, when religion was subverted; nor was my success below my expectation: the love of pleasure is too strongly implanted in the female breast, to suffer them scrupulously to examine the validity of arguments designed to weaken restraint; all are easily led to believe, that whatever thwarts their inclination must be wrong; little more, therefore, was required, than by the addition of some circumstances, and the exaggeration of others, to make merriment supply the place of demonstration; nor was I so senseless as to offer arguments to such as could not attend to them, and with whom a repartee or catch would more effectually answer the same purpose. This being effected, there remained only "the dread of the world;" but Roxana soared too high, to think the opinion of others worthy her notice; Lætitia seemed to think of it only to declare, that "if all her hairs were worlds," she should reckon them "well lost for love;" and Pastorella fondly conceived, that she could dwell for ever by the side of a bubbling fountain, content with her swain and fleecy care; without considering that stillness and solitude can afford satisfaction only to innocence.

It is not the desire of new acquisitions, but the glory of conquests, that fires the soldier's breast; as indeed the town is seldom worth much, when it has suffered the devastations of a siege; so that though I did not openly declare the effects of my own prowess, which is forbidden by the laws of honour, it cannot be supposed that I was very solicitous to bury my reputation, or to hinder accidental discoveries. To have gained one victory, is an inducement to

hazard a second engagement: and though the success of the general should be a reason for increasing the strength of the fortification, it becomes, with many a pretence for an immediate surrender, under the notion that no power is able to withstand so formidable an adversary; while others brave the danger, and think it mean to surrender, and dastardly to fly. Melissa, indeed, knew better; and though she could not boast the apathy, steadiness, and inflexibility of a Cato, wanted not the more prudent virtue of Scipio, and gained the victory by declining the contest.

You must not, however, imagine, that I was, during this state of abandoned libertinism, so fully convinced of the fitness of my own conduct, as to be free from uneasiness. I knew very well, that I might justly be deemed the pest of society, and that such proceedings must terminate in the destruction of my health and fortune; but to admit thoughts of this kind was to live upon the rack: I fled, therefore, to the regions of mirth and jollity as they are called, and endeavoured with burgundy, and a continual rotation of company, to free myself from the pangs of reflection. From these orgies we frequently sallied forth in quest of adventures, to the no small terror and consternation of all the sober stragglers that came in our way: and though we never injured, like our illustrious progenitors, the Mohocks, either life or limbs; yet we have in the midst of Covent Garden buried a tailor, who had been troublesome to some of our fine gentlemen, beneath a heap of cabbage-leaves and stalks, with this conceit,

Satia te caule quem semper cupisti.

Glut yourself with cabbage, of which you have always been greedy.

There can be no reason for mentioning the common exploits of breaking windows and bruising the watch; unless it be to tell you of the device of producing before the justice broken lanthorns, which have been paid for a hundred times: or their appearances with patches on their heads, under pretence of being cut by the sword that was never drawn: nor need I say any thing of the more formidable attack of sturdy chairmen, armed with poles; by a slight stroke of which, the pride of Ned Revel's face was at once laid flat, and that effected in an instant, which its most mortal foe had for years assayed in vain. I shall pass over the accidents that attended attempts to scale windows, and endeavours to dislodge signs from their hooks; there are many "hair breadth 'scapes," besides those in the "imminent deadly breach;" but the rake's life, though it be equally hazardous with that of the soldier, is neither accompanied with present honour nor with pleasing retrospect; such is, and such ought to be, the difference between the enemy and the preserver of his country.

Amidst such giddy and thoughtless extravagance, it will not seem strange, that I was often the dupe of coarse flattery. When Mons. L'Allonge assured me that I thrust quart over arm better than any man in England, what could I less than present him with a sword that cost me thirty pieces? I was bound for a hundred pounds for Tom Trippet, because he had declared that he would dance a minuet with any man in the three kingdoms except myself. But I often parted with money against my inclination, either because I wanted the resolution to refuse, or dreaded the appellation of a niggardly fellow; and I may be truly said to have squandered my estate, without honour, without friends, and without pleasure. The last may, perhaps, appear strange to men unacquainted with the masquerade of life: I deceived others, and I endeavoured to deceive myself; and have worn the face of pleasantry and gayety, while my heart suffered the most exquisite torture.

By the instigation and encouragement of my friends, I became at length ambitious of a seat in parliament; and accordingly set out for the town of Wallop in the west, where my arrival was welcomed by a thousand throats, and I was in three days sure of a majority; but after drinking out one hundred and fifty hogsheads of wine, and bribing two-thirds of the corporation twice over, I had the mortification to find that the borough had been before sold to Mr. Courtly.

In a life of this kind, my fortune, though considerable, was presently dissipated; and as the attraction grows more strong the nearer any body approaches the earth, when once a man begins to sink into poverty, he falls with velocity always increasing; every supply is purchased at a higher and higher price, and every office of kindness obtained with greater and greater difficulty. Having now acquainted you with my state of elevation, I shall, if you encourage the continuance of my correspondence, show you by what steps I descended from a first floor in Pall-Mall to my present habitation. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

MISARGYRUS.

No. 39.] TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 1753.

Οὐσευς φυλλοισι καλυψατο, τῳ δ' αρ' Αθηνη
Ὑπνον επ' ομμασι χευ', ἱνα μιν πανσειε ταχιστα
Δυσπονεος καματοιο.

HOM.

—Pallas pour'd sweet slumbers on his soul;
And balmy dreams, the gift of soft repose,
Calm'd all his pains, and banish'd all his woes.

POPE.

IF every day did not produce fresh instances of the ingratitude of mankind, we might, perhaps, be at a loss why so liberal and impartial a benefactor as Sleep should meet with so few historians or panegyrists. Writers are so totally absorbed by the business of the day, as never to turn their attention to that power, whose officious hand so seasonably suspends the burden of life: and without whose interposition man would not be able to endure the fatigue of labour, however rewarded, or the struggle with opposition, however successful.

Night, though she divides to many the longest part of life, and to almost all the most innocent and happy, is yet unthankfully neglected, except by those who pervert her gifts.

The astronomers, indeed, expect her with impatience, and felicitate themselves upon her arrival: Fontenelle has not failed to celebrate her praises; and to chide the sun for hiding from his view the worlds, which he imagines to appear in

every constellation. Nor have the poets been always deficient in her praises; Milton has observed of the Night, that it is "the pleasant time, the cool, the silent."

These men may, indeed, well be expected to pay particular homage to Night, since they are indebted to her, not only for cessation of pain, but increase of pleasure; not only for slumber, but for knowledge. But the greater part of her avowed votaries are the sons of luxury: who appropriate to festivity the hours designed for rest; who consider the reign of pleasure as commencing when day begins to withdraw her busy multitudes, and ceases to dissipate attention by intrusive and unwelcome variety; who begin to awake to joy when the rest of the world sinks into insensibility; and revel in the soft affluence of flattering and artificial lights, which "more shadowy set off the face of things."

Without touching upon the fatal consequences of a custom, which, as Ramazzini observes, will be for ever condemned, and for ever retained; it may be observed, that however Sleep may be put off from time to time, yet the demand is of so importunate a nature, as not to remain long unsatisfied: and if, as some have done, we consider it as the tax of life, we cannot but observe it as a tax that must be paid, unless we could cease to be men; for Alexander declared, that nothing convinced him that he was not a divinity, but his not being able to live without sleep.

To live without sleep in our present fluctuating state, however desirable it might seem to the lady in Clelia, can surely be the wish only of the young or the ignorant; to every one else, a perpetual vigil will appear to be a state of wretchedness, second only to that of the miserable beings whom Swift has in his travels so elegantly described, as "supremely cursed with immortality."

Sleep is necessary to the happy to prevent satiety, and to endear life by a short absence; and to the miserable, to relieve them by intervals of quiet. Life is to most, such as could not be endured without frequent intermission of existence: Homer, therefore, has thought it an office worthy of the goddess of wisdom, to lay Ulysses asleep when landed on Phæacia.

It is related of Barretier, whose early advances in literature scarce any human mind has equalled, that he spent twelve hours of the four and twenty in sleep: yet this appears from the bad state of his health, and the shortness of his life, to have been too small a respite for a mind so vigorously and intensely employed: it is to be regretted, therefore, that he did not exercise his mind less, and his body more: since by this means it is highly probable, that though he would not then have astonished with the blaze of a comet, he would yet have shone with the permanent radiance of a fixed star.

Nor should it be objected, that there have been many men who daily spend fifteen or sixteen hours in study: for by some of whom this is reported it has never been done: others have done it for a short time only; and of the rest it appears, that they employed their minds in such operations as required neither celerity nor strength, in the low drudgery of collating copies, comparing authorities, digesting dictionaries, or accumulating compilations.

Men of study and imagination are frequently upbraided by the industrious and plodding sons of care, with passing too great a part of their life in a state of inaction. But these defiers of sleep seem not to remember, that though it must be granted them that they are crawling about before the break of day, it can seldom be said that they are perfectly awake; they exhaust no spirits, and require no repairs; but lie torpid as a toad in marble, or at least are known to live only by an inert and sluggish locomotive faculty, and may be said, like a wounded snake, to "drag their slow length along."

Man has been long known among philosophers by the appellation of the microcosm, or epitome of the world: the resemblance between the great and little world might, by a rational observer, be detailed to many particulars; and to many more by a fanciful speculatist. I know not in which of these two classes I shall be ranged for observing, that as the total quantity of light and darkness allotted in the course of the year to every region of the earth is the same, though distributed at various times and in different portions; so, perhaps, to each individual of the human species, nature has ordained the same quantity of wakefulness and sleep; though divided by some into a total quiescence and vigorous exertion of their faculties, and blended by others in a kind of twilight of existence, in a state between dreaming and reasoning, in which they either think without action, or act without thought.

The poets are generally well affected to sleep: as men who think with vigour, they require respite from thought; and gladly resign themselves to that gentle power, who not only bestows rest, but frequently leads them to happier regions, where patrons are always kind, and audiences are always candid, where they are feasted in the bowers of imagination, and crowned with flowers divested of their prickles, and laurels of unfading verdure.

The more refined and penetrating part of mankind, who take wide surveys of the wilds of life, who see the innumerable terrors and distresses that are perpetually preying on the heart of man, and discern with unhappy perspicuity, calamities yet latent in their causes, are glad to close their eyes upon the gloomy prospect, and lose in a short insensibility the remembrance of others' miseries and their own. The hero has no higher hope, than that, after having routed legions after legions, and added kingdom to kingdom, he shall retire to milder happiness, and close his days in social festivity. The wit or the sage can expect no greater happiness, than that, after having harassed his reason in deep researches, and fatigued his fancy in boundless excursions, he shall sink at night in the tranquillity of sleep.

The poets, among all those that enjoy the blessings of sleep, have been least ashamed to acknowledge their benefactor. How much Statius considered the evils of life as assuaged and softened by the balm of slumber, we may discover by that pathetic invocation, which he poured out in his waking nights: and that Cowley among the other felicities of his darling solitude, did not forget to number the privilege of sleeping without disturbance, we may learn from the rank that he assigns among the gifts of na-

ture to the poppy, "which is scattered," says he, "over the fields of corn, that all the needs of man may be easily satisfied, and that bread and sleep may be found together."

Si quis invisum Cereri benignæ
Me putat germen, vehementer errat;
Illa me in partem recipit libenter
Fertilis agri.

Meque frumentumque simul per omnes
Consulens mundo Deа spargit oras;
Crescite, O! dixit, duo magna susten-
tacula vitæ.

Carpe, mortalis, mea dona lætus,
Carpe, nec plantas alias require,
Sed satur panis, satur et soporis,
Cætera sperne.

He wildly errs who thinks I yield
Precedence in the well-cloth'd field,
Though mix'd with wheat I grow:
Indulgent Ceres knew my worth,
And to adorn the teeming earth,
She bade the poppy blow.

Nor vainly gay the sight to please,
But bless'd with power mankind to ease,
The goddess saw me rise:
"Thrive with the life-supporting grain,"
She cried, "the solace of the swain,
The cordial of his eyes.

"Seize, happy mortal, seize the good,
My hand supplies thy sleep and food,
And makes thee truly blest:
With plenteous meals enjoy the day,
In slumbers pass the night away,
And leave to fate the rest."

C. B.

Sleep, therefore, as the chief of all earthly blessings, is justly appropriated to industry and temperance; the refreshing rest, and the peaceful night, are the portion only of him who lies down weary with honest labour, and free from the fumes of indigested luxury; it is the just doom of laziness and gluttony, to be inactive without ease, and drowsy without tranquillity.

Sleep has been often mentioned as the image of death; "so like it," says Sir Thomas Brown, "that I dare not trust it without my prayers;" their resemblance is, indeed, apparent and striking; they both, when they seize the body, leave the soul at liberty; and wise is he that remembers of both, that they can be safe and happy only by virtue.

No. 41.] TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 1753.

Si mutabile pectus
Est tibi, consiliis, non curribus, utere nostris,
Dum potes, et solidis etiamnum sedibus adstas.
Dumque male optatos nondum premis inscius axes.
OVID.

——— Th' attempt forsake,
And not my chariot but my counsel take;
While yet securely on the earth you stand;
Nor touch the horses with too rash a hand.

ADDISON.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Fleet, March 24th.

SIR,

I NOW send you the sequel of my story; which had not been so long delayed, if I could have brought myself to imagine, that any real impatience was felt for the fate of Misargyrus; who has travelled no unbeaten track to misery, and consequently can present the reader only with such incidents as occur in daily life.

You have seen me, Sir, in the zenith of my glory, not dispensing the kindly warmth of an all-cheering sun; but like another Phaëton, scorching and blasting every thing round me. I shall proceed, therefore, to finish my career, and pass as rapidly as possible through the remaining vicissitudes of my life.

When I first began to be in want of money, I made no doubt of an immediate supply. The newspapers were perpetually offering directions to men, who seemed to have no other business than to gather heaps of gold for those who place their supreme felicity in scattering it. I posted away, therefore, to one of these advertisers, who by his proposals seemed to deal in thousands: and was not a little chagrined to find, that this general benefactor would have nothing to do with any larger sum than thirty pounds, nor would venture that without a joint note from myself and a reputable housekeeper, or for a longer time than three months.

It was not yet so bad with me, as that I needed to solicit surety for thirty pounds: yet partly from the greediness that extravagance always produces, and partly from a desire of seeing the humour of a petty usurer, a character of which I had hitherto lived in ignorance, I condescended to listen to his terms. He proceeded to inform me of my great felicity in not falling into the hands of an extortioner; and assured me, that I should find him extremely moderate in his demands: he was not, indeed, certain that he could furnish me with the whole sum, for people were at this particular time extremely pressing and importunate for money: yet, as I had the appearance of a gentleman, he would try what he could do, and give me his answer in three days.

At the expiration of the time, I called upon him again; and was again informed of the great demand for money, and that "money was money now:" he then advised me to be punctual in my payment, as that might induce him to befriend me hereafter; and delivered me the money, deducting at the rate of five and thirty *per cent.*, with another panegyric upon his own moderation.

I will not tire you with the various practices of usurious oppression; but cannot omit my transaction with Squeeze on Tower-hill, who, finding me a young man of considerable expectations, employed an agent to persuade me to borrow five hundred pounds, to be refunded by an annual payment of twenty *per cent.* during the joint lives of his daughter Nancy Squeeze and myself. The negociator came prepared to enforce his proposal with all his art; but finding that I caught his offer with the eagerness of necessity, he grew cold and languid; "he had mentioned it out of kindness; he would try to serve me: Mr. Squeeze was an honest man, but extremely cautious." In three days he came to tell me, that his endeavours had been ineffectual, Mr. Squeeze having no good opinion of my life; but that there was one expedient remaining: Mrs. Squeeze could influence her husband, and her good will might be gained by a compliment. I waited that afternoon on Mrs. Squeeze, and poured out before her the flatteries which usually gain access to rank and beauty; I did not then

know, that there are places in which the only compliment is a bribe. Having yet credit with a jeweller, I afterwards procured a ring of thirty guineas, which I humbly presented, and was soon admitted to a treaty with Mr. Squeeze. He appeared peevish and backward, and my old friend whispered me, that he would never make a dry bargain: I therefore invited him to a tavern. Nine times we met on the affair; nine times I paid four pounds for the supper and claret; and nine guineas I gave the agent for good offices. I then obtained the money, paying ten *per cent.* advance; and at the tenth meeting gave another supper, and disbursed fifteen pounds for the writings.

Others who styled themselves brokers, would only trust their money upon goods: that I might, therefore, try every art of expensive folly, I took a house and furnished it. I amused myself with despoiling my moveables of their glossy appearance, for fear of alarming the lender with suspicions; and in this I succeeded so well, that he favoured me with one hundred and sixty pounds upon that which was rated at seven hundred. I then found that I was to maintain a guardian about me to prevent the goods from being broken or removed. This was, indeed, an unexpected tax; but it was too late to recede: and I comforted myself, that I might prevent a creditor, of whom I had some apprehensions, from seizing, by having a prior execution always in the house.

By such means I had so embarrassed myself, that my whole attention was engaged in contriving excuses, and raising small sums to quiet such as words would no longer mollify. It cost me eighty pounds in presents to Mr. Leech, the attorney, for his forbearance of one hundred, which he solicited me to take when I had no need. I was perpetually harassed with importunate demands, and insulted by wretches, who a few months before would not have dared to raise their eyes from the dust before me. I lived in continual terror, frighted by every noise at the door, and terrified at the approach of every step quicker than common. I never retired to rest without feeling the justness of the Spanish proverb, "Let him who sleeps too much, borrow the pillow of a debtor:" my solicitude and vexation kept me long waking; and when I had closed my eyes, I was pursued or insulted by visionary bailiffs.

When I reflected upon the meanness of the shifts I had reduced myself to, I could not but curse the folly and extravagance that had overwhelmed me in a sea of troubles, from which it was highly improbable that I should ever emerge. I had some time lived in hopes of an estate, at the death of my uncle; but he disappointed me by marrying his housekeeper; and, catching an opportunity soon after of quarrelling with me, for settling twenty pounds a year upon a girl whom I had seduced, told me that he would take care to prevent his fortune from being squandered upon prostitutes.

Nothing now remained, but the chance of extricating myself by marriage; a scheme which, I flattered myself, nothing but my present distress would have made me think on with patience. I determined, therefore, to look out for a tender novice, with a large fortune at her own disposal; and accordingly fixed my eyes upon Miss Biddy Simper. I had now paid her six or seven visits; and so fully convinced her of my being a gentleman and a rake, that I made no doubt that both her person and fortune would soon be mine.

At this critical time, Miss Gripe called upon me, in a chariot bought with my money, and loaded with trinkets that I had in my days of affluence lavished on her. Those days were now over; and there was little hope that they would ever return. She was not able to withstand the temptation of ten pounds that Talon the bailiff offered her, but brought him into my apartment disguised in a livery; and taking my sword to the window, under pretence of admiring the workmanship, beckoned him to seize me.

Delay would have been expensive without use, as the debt was too considerable for payment or bail: I therefore suffered myself to be immediately conducted to jail.

Vestibulum ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci,
Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia curæ;
Pallentesque habitant morbi, tristisque senectus,
Et metus, et malesuada fames, et turpis egestas.
VIRG.

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell
And pale diseases, and repining age;
Want, fear, and famine's unresisted rage.
DRYDEN.

Confinement of any kind is dreadful: a prison is sometimes able to shock those, who endure it in a good cause: let your imagination, therefore, acquaint you with what I have not words to express, and conceive, if possible, the horrors of imprisonment attended with reproach and ignominy, of involuntary association with the refuse of mankind, with wretches who were before too abandoned for society, but being now freed from shame or fear, are hourly improving their vices by consorting with each other.

There are, however, a few whom, like myself, imprisonment has rather mortified than hardened: with these only I converse; and of these you may perhaps hereafter receive some account from your humble servant,

MISARGYRUS.

No. 45.] TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1753.

Nulla fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erit. LUCAN

No faith of partnership dominion owns:
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

IT is well known, that many things appear plausible in speculation, which can never be reduced to practice; and that of the numberless projects that have flattered mankind with theoretical speciousness, few have served any other purpose than to show the ingenuity of their contrivers. A voyage to the moon, however romantic and absurd the scheme may now appear, since the properties of air have been better understood, seemed highly probable to many of the aspiring wits in the last century, who began to doat upon their glossy plumes, and fluttered with impatience for the hour of their departure:

——Pereunt vestiga mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum

Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost.
And, ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost. POPE

Among the fallacies which only experience can detect, there are some of which scarcely experience itself can destroy the influence; some which, by a captivating show of indubitable certainty, are perpetually gaining upon the human mind; and which, though every trial ends in disappointment, obtain new credit as the sense of miscarriage wears gradually away, persuade us to try again what we have tried already, and expose us by the same failure to double vexation.

Of this tempting, this delusive kind, is the expectation of great performances by confederated strength. The speculatist, when he has carefully observed how much may be performed by a single hand, calculates by a very easy operation the force of thousands, and goes on accumulating power till resistance vanishes before it; then rejoices in the success of his new scheme, and wonders at the folly or idleness of former ages, who have lived in want of what might so readily be procured, and suffered themselves to be debarred from happiness by obstacles which one united effort would have so easily surmounted.

But this gigantic phantom of collective power vanishes at once into air and emptiness, at the first attempt to put it into action. The different apprehensions, the discordant passions, the jarring interests of men, will scarcely permit that many should unite in one undertaking.

Of a great and complicated design some will never be brought to discern the end; and of the several means by which it may be accomplished, the choice will be a perpetual subject of debate, as every man is swayed in his determination by his own knowledge or convenience. In a long series of action some will languish with fatigue, and some be drawn off by present gratifications: some will loiter because others labour, and some will cease to labour because others loiter: and if once they come within prospect of success and profit, some will be greedy and others envious; some will undertake more than they can perform, to enlarge their claims of advantage; some will perform less than they undertake, lest their labours should chiefly turn to the benefit of others.

The history of mankind informs us that a single power is very seldom broken by a confederacy. States of different interests, and aspects malevolent to each other, may be united for a time by common distress; and in the ardour of self preservation fall unanimously upon an enemy, by whom they are all equally endangered. But if their first attack can be withstood, time will never fail to dissolve their union: success and miscarriage will be equally destructive: after the conquest of a province, they will quarrel in the division; after the loss of a battle, all will be endeavouring to secure themselves by abandoning the rest.

From the impossibility of confining numbers to the constant and uniform prosecution of a common interest, arises the difficulty of securing subjects against the encroachment of governors. Power is always gradually stealing away from the many to the few, because the few are more vigilant and consistent; it still contracts to a smaller number, till in time it centres in a single person.

Thus all the forms of governments instituted among mankind, perpetually tend towards monarchy; and power, however diffused through the whole community, is by negligence or corruption, commotion or distress, reposed at last in the chief magistrate.

"There never appear," says Swift, "more than five or six men of genius in an age; but if they were united, the world could not stand before them." It is happy, therefore, for mankind, that of this union there is no probability. As men take in a wider compass of intellectual survey, they are more likely to choose different objects of pursuit: as they see more ways to the same end, they will be less easily persuaded to travel together; as each is better qualified to form an independent scheme of private greatness, he will reject with greater obstinacy the project of another; as each is more able to distinguish himself as the head of a party, he will less readily be made a follower or an associate.

The reigning philosophy informs us, that the vast bodies which constitute the universe, are regulated in their progress through the ethereal spaces, by the perpetual agency of contrary forces; by one of which they are restrained from deserting their orbits, and losing themselves in the immensity of heaven; and held off by the other from rushing together, and clustering round their centre with everlasting cohesion.

The same contrariety of impulse may be perhaps discovered in the motions of men: we are formed for society, not for combination: we are equally unqualified to live in a close connexion with our fellow-beings, and in total separation from them; we are attracted towards each other by general sympathy, but kept back from contact by private interests.

Some philosophers have been foolish enough to imagine, that improvements might be made in the system of the universe, by a different arrangement of the orbs of heaven; and politicians, equally ignorant and equally presumptuous, may easily be led to suppose that the happiness of our world would be promoted by a different tendency of the human mind. It appears, indeed, to a slight and superficial observer, that many things impracticable in our present state, might be easily effected, if mankind were better disposed to union and co-operation: but a little reflection will discover, that if confederacies were easily formed, they would lose their efficacy, since numbers would be opposed to numbers, and unanimity to unanimity: and instead of the present petty competitions of individuals or single families, multitudes would be supplanting multitudes, and thousands plotting against thousands.

There is no class of the human species, of which the union seems to have been more expected, than of the learned: the rest of the world have almost always agreed to shut scholars up together in colleges and cloisters; surely not without hope, that they would look for that happiness in concord, which they were debarred from finding in variety; and that such conjunctions of intellect would recompense the munificence of founders and patrons, by performances above the reach of any single mind.

But Discord, who found means to roll her apple into the banquetting chamber of the goddesses, has had the address to scatter her laurels in the

seminaries of learning. The friendship of students and of beauties is for the most part equally sincere, and equally durable: as both depend for happiness on the regard of others, on that of which the value arises merely from comparison, they are both exposed to perpetual jealousies, and both incessantly employed in schemes to intercept the praises of each other.

I am, however, far from intending to inculcate that this confinement of the studious to studious companions, has been wholly without advantage to the public: neighbourhood, where it does not conciliate friendship, incites competition; and he that would contentedly rest in a lower degree of excellence, where he had no rival to dread, will be urged by his impatience of inferiority to incessant endeavours after great attainments.

These stimulations of honest rivalry are, perhaps, the chief effects of academies and societies; for whatever be the bulk of their joint labours, every single piece is always the production of an individual, that owes nothing to his colleagues but the contagion of diligence, a resolution to write, because the rest are writing, and the scorn of obscurity while the rest are illustrious.

No. 50.] SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 1753.

Quicunque turpi fraude semel innotuit,
Etiamsi verum dicit, amittit fidem. PHÆD.

The wretch that often has deceived,
Though truth he speaks, is ne'er believed.

WHEN Aristotle was once asked, what a man could gain by uttering falsehoods? he replied, "Not to be credited when he shall tell the truth."

The character of a liar is at once so hateful and contemptible, that even of those who have lost their virtue it might be expected that from the violation of truth they should be restrained by their pride. Almost every other vice that disgraces human nature, may be kept in countenance by applause and association; the corrupter of virgin innocence sees himself envied by the men, and at least not detested by the women; the drunkard may easily unite with beings, devoted like himself to noisy merriments or silent insensibility, who will celebrate his victories over the novices of intemperance, boast themselves the companions of his prowess, and tell with rapture of the multitudes whom unsuccessful emulation has hurried to the grave; even the robber and the cut-throat have their followers, who admire their address and intrepidity, their stratagems of rapine, and their fidelity to the gang.

The liar, and only the liar, is invariably and universally despised, abandoned, and disowned; he has no domestic consolations which he can oppose to the censure of mankind; he can retire to no fraternity, where his crimes my stand in the place of virtues: but is given up to the hisses of the multitude, without friend and without apologist. It is the peculiar condition of falsehood, to be equally detested by the good and bad: "The devils," says Sir Thomas Brown, "do not tell lies to one another; for truth is necessary to all societies: nor can the society of hell subsist without it."

It is natural to expect, that a crime thus generally detested, should be generally avoided; at least that none should expose himself to unabated and unpitied infamy, without an adequate temptation; and that to guilt so easily detected, and so severely punished, an adequate temptation would not readily be found.

Yet so it is in defiance of censure and contempt, truth is frequently violated: and scarcely the most vigilant and unremitted circumspection will secure him that mixes with mankind, from being hourly deceived by men of whom it can scarcely be imagined, that they mean any injury to him or profit to themselves: even where the subject of conversation could not have been expected to put the passions in motion, or to have excited either hope or fear, or zeal or malignity, sufficient to induce any man to put his reputation in hazard, however little he might value it, or to overpower the love of truth, however weak might be its influence.

The casuists have very diligently distinguished lies into their several classes, according to their various degrees of malignity; but they have, I think, generally omitted that which is most common, and, perhaps, not least mischievous: which, since the moralists have not given it a name, I shall distinguish as the *lie* of *vanity*.

To vanity may justly be imputed most of the falsehoods which every man perceives hourly playing upon his ear, and, perhaps, most of those that are propagated with success. To the lie of commerce, and the lie of malice, the motive is so apparent, that they are seldom negligently or implicitly received; suspicion is always watchful over the practices of interest; and whatever the hope of gain, or desire of mischief, can prompt one man to assert, another is by reasons equally cogent incited to refute. But vanity pleases herself with such slight gratifications, and looks forward to pleasure so remotely consequential, that her practices raise no alarm, and her stratagems are not easily discovered.

Vanity is, indeed, often suffered to pass unpursued by suspicion, because he that would watch her motions, can never be at rest; fraud and malice are bounded in their influence; some opportunity of time and place is necessary to their agency; but scarce any man is abstracted one moment from his vanity; and he, to whom truth affords no gratifications, is generally inclined to seek them in falsehoods.

It is remarked by Sir Kenelm Digby, "That every man has a desire to appear superior to others, though it were only in having seen what they have not seen." Such an accidental advantage, since it neither implies merit, nor confers dignity, one would think should not be desired so much as to be counterfeited: yet even this vanity, trifling as it is, produces innumerable narratives, all equally false; but more or less credible in proportion to the skill or confidence of the relater. How many may a man of diffusive conversation count among his acquaintances, whose lives have been signalized by numberless escapes; who never cross the river but in a storm, or take a journey in the country without more adventures than befell the knights-errant of ancient times in pathless forests or enchanted castles! How many must he know, to whom portents and prodigies are of daily occurrence; and for whom nature is hourly working wonders invisible to every other eye, only to supply them with subjects of conversation?

Others there are that amuse themselves with the dissemination of falsehood, at greater hazard of detection and disgrace; men marked out by some lucky planet for universal confidence and friendship, who have been consulted in every difficulty, intrusted with every secret, and summoned to every transaction; it is the supreme felicity of these men, to stun all companies with noisy information; to still doubt, and overbear opposition, with certain knowledge or authentic intelligence. A liar of this kind with a strong memory or brisk imagination, is often the oracle of an obscure club, and, till time discovers his impostures, dictates to his hearers with uncontrolled authority; for if a public question be started, he was present at the debate; if a new fashion be mentioned, he was at court the first day of its appearance; if a new performance of literature draws the attention of the public, he has patronized the author, and seen his work in manuscript; if a criminal of eminence be condemned to die, he often predicted his fate, and endeavoured his reformation: and who that lives at a distance from the scene of action, will dare to contradict a man who reports from his own eyes and ears, and to whom all persons and affairs are thus intimately known?

This kind of falsehood is generally successful for a time, because it is practised at first with timidity and caution; but the prosperity of the liar is of short duration; the reception of one story is always an incitement to the forgery of another less probable; and he goes on to triumph over tacit credulity, till pride or reason rise up against him, and his companions will no longer endure to see him wiser than themselves.

It is apparent, that the inventors of all these fictions intend some exaltation of themselves, and are led off by the pursuit of honour from their attendance upon truth: their narratives always imply some consequence in favour of their courage, their sagacity, or their activity, their familiarity with the learned, or their reception among the great; they are always bribed by the present pleasure of seeing themselves superior to those that surround them, and receiving the homage of silent attention, and envious admiration.

But vanity is sometimes excited to fiction by less visible gratifications; the present age abounds with a race of liars who are content with the consciousness of falsehood, and whose pride is to deceive others without any gain or glory to themselves. Of this tribe it is the supreme pleasure to remark a lady in the play-house or the park, and to publish, under the character of a man suddenly enamoured, an advertisement in the news of the next day, containing a minute description of her person and her dress. From this artifice, however, no other effect can be expected than perturbations which the writer can never see, and conjectures of which he never can be informed; some mischief, however, he hopes he has done; and to have done mischief is of some importance. He sets his invention to work again, and produces a narrative of a robbery or a murder, with all the circumstances of time and place accurately adjusted. This is a jest of greater effect, and longer duration: if he fixes his scene at a proper distance, he may for several days keep a wife in terror for her husband, or a mother for her son; and please himself with reflecting, that by his abilities and address some addition is made to the miseries of life.

There is, I think, an ancient law of Scotland, by which *leasing-making* was capitally punished. I am, indeed, far from desiring to increase in this kingdom the number of executions; yet I cannot but think, that they who destroy the confidence of society, weaken the credit of intelligence, and interrupt the security of life; harass the delicate with shame, and perplex the timorous with alarms; might very properly be awakened to a sense of their crimes, by denunciations of a whipping-post or pillory: since many are so insensible of right and wrong, that they have no standard of action but the law; nor feel guilt, but as they dread punishment.

No. 53.] Tuesday May 8, 1753

Quisque suos patimur manes. VIRG.

Each has his lot, and bears the fate he drew,

Fleet, May 6.

Sir,

In consequence of my engagements, I address you once more from the habitations of misery.—In this place, from which business and pleasure are equally excluded, and in which our only employment and diversion is to hear the narratives of each other, I might much sooner have gathered materials for a letter, had I not hoped to have been reminded of my promise: but since I find myself placed in the regions of oblivion, where I am no less neglected by you than by the rest of mankind, I resolved no longer to wait for solicitation, but stole early this evening from between gloomy sullenness, and riotous merriment, to give you an account of part of my companions.

One of the most eminent members of our club is Mr. Edward Scamper, a man of whose name the Olympic heroes would not have been ashamed. Ned was born to a small estate, which he determined to improve; and therefore as soon as he became of age, mortgaged part of his land to buy a mare and stallion, and bred horses for the course. He was at first very successful, and gained several of the king's plates, as he is now every day boasting, at the expense of very little more than ten times their value.—At last, however, he discovered, that victory brought him more honour than profit: resolving, therefore, to be rich as well as illustrious, he replenished his pockets by another mortgage, became on a sudden a daring better, and resolving not to trust a jockey with his fortune, rode his horse himself, distanced two of his competitors the first heat, and at last won the race by forcing his horse on a descent to full speed at the hazard of his neck. His estate was thus repaired, and some friends that had no souls advised him to give over; but Ned now knew the way to riches, and therefore without caution increased his expenses. From this hour he talked and dreamed of nothing but a horse-race; and rising soon to the summit of equestrian reputation, he was constantly expected on every course, divided all his time between lords and jockeys, and, as the unexperienced regulated their bets by his example, gained a great deal of money by laying openly on one horse, and secretly on the other. Ned was now so sure of growing

rich, that he involved his estate in a third mortgage, borrowed money of all his friends, and risked his whole fortune upon Bay Lincoln. He mounted with beating heart, started fair, and won the first heat: but in the second, as he was pushing against the foremost of his rivals, his girth broke, his shoulder was dislocated, and before he was dismissed by the surgeon, two bailiffs fastened upon him, and he saw Newmarket no more. His daily amusement for four years has been to blow the signal for starting, to make imaginary matches, to repeat the pedigree of Bay Lincoln, and to form resolutions against trusting another groom with the choice of his girth.

The next in seniority is Mr. Timothy Snug, a man of deep contrivance, and impenetrable secrecy. His father died with the reputation of more wealth than he possessed; Tim, therefore, entered the world with a reputed fortune of ten thousand pounds. Of this he very well knew that eight thousand was imaginary; but being a man of refined policy, and knowing how much honour is annexed to riches, he resolved never to detect his own poverty; but furnished his house with elegance, scattered his money with profusion, encouraged every scheme of costly pleasure, spoke of petty losses with negligence, and on the day before an execution entered his doors, had proclaimed at a public table his resolution to be jolted no longer in a hackney coach.

Another of my companions is the magnanimous Jack Scatter, the son of a country gentleman, who, having no other care than to leave him rich, considered that literature could not be had without expense; masters would not teach for nothing; and when a book was bought and read, it would sell for little. Jack was, therefore, taught to read and write by the butler; and when this acquisition was made, was left to pass his days in the kitchen and the stable, where he heard no crime censured but covetousness and distrust of poor honest servants, and where all the praise was bestowed on good house-keeping, and a free heart. At the death of his father, Jack set himself to retrieve the honour of his family: he abandoned his cellar to the butler, ordered his groom to provide hay and corn at discretion, took his housekeeper's word for the expenses of the kitchen, allowed all his servants to do their work by deputies, permitted his domestics to keep his house open to their relations and acquaintance, and in ten years was conveyed hither, without having purchased by the loss of his patrimony either honour or pleasure, or obtained any other gratification than that of having corrupted the neighbouring villagers by luxury and idleness.

Dick Serge was a draper in Cornhill, and passed eight years in prosperous diligence, without any care but to keep his books, or any ambition but to be in time an alderman: but then, by some unaccountable revolution in his understanding, he became enamoured of wit and humour, despised the conversation of pedlars and stock-jobbers, and rambled every night to the regions of gayety, in quest of company suited to his taste. The wits at first flocked about him for sport, and afterwards for interest; some found their way into his books, and some into his pockets; the man of adventure was equipped from his shop for the pursuit of a fortune; and he had sometimes the honour to have his security accepted when his friends were in distress. Elated with these associations, he soon learned to neglect his shop; and having drawn his money out of the funds, to avoid the necessity of teasing men of honour for trifling debts, he has been forced at last to retire hither, till his friends can procure him a post at court.

Another that joins in the same mess is Bob Cornice, whose life has been spent in fitting up a house. About ten years ago, Bob purchased the country habitation of a bankrupt: the mere shell of a building Bob holds no great matter; the inside is the test of elegance. Of this house he was no sooner master, than he summoned twenty workmen to his assistance, tore up the floors and laid them anew, stripped off the wainscot, drew the windows from their frames, altered the disposition of doors and fire-places, and cast the whole fabric into a new form: his next care was to have his ceilings painted, his panels gilt, and his chimney-pieces carved: every thing was executed by the ablest hands: Bob's business was to follow the workmen with a microscope, and call upon them to retouch their performances, and heighten excellence to perfection. The reputation of his house now brings round him a daily confluence of visitants, and every one tells him of some elegance which he has hitherto overlooked, some convenience not yet procured, or some new mode in ornament or furniture. Bob, who had no wish but to be admired, nor any guide but the fashion, thought every thing beautiful in proportion as it was new, and considered his work as unfinished while any observer could suggest an addition; some alteration was therefore every day made, without any other motive than the charms of novelty. A traveller at last suggested to him the convenience of a grotto; Bob immediately ordered the mount of his garden to be excavated: and having laid out a large sum in shells and minerals, was busy in regulating the disposition of the colours and lustres, when two gentlemen, who had asked permission to see his gardens, presented him a writ, and led him off to less elegant apartments.

I know not, Sir, whether among this fraternity of sorrow, you will think any much to be pitied; nor indeed do many of them appear to solicit compassion, for they generally applaud their own conduct, and despise those whom want of taste or spirit suffers to grow rich. It were happy if the prisons of the kingdom were filled only with characters like these, men whom prosperity could not make useful, and whom ruin cannot make wise: but there are among us many who raise different sensations, many that owe their present misery to the seductions of treachery, the strokes of casualty, or the tenderness of pity; many whose sufferings disgrace society, and whose virtues would adorn it: of these, when familiarity shall have enabled me to recount their stories without horror, you may expect another narrative from, Sir, your most humble servant,

MISARGYRUS.

No. 58.] SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1753.

Damnant quod non intelligunt. Cic.

They condemn what they do not understand.

EURIPIDES having presented Socrates with the writings of Heraclitus, a philosopher famed for

involution and obscurity, inquired afterwards his opinion of their merit. "What I understand," said Socrates, "I find to be excellent; and, therefore, believe that to be of equal value which I cannot understand."

The reflection of every man who reads this passage will suggest to him the difference between the practice of Socrates, and that of modern critics; Socrates, who had, by long observation upon himself and others, discovered the weakness of the strongest, and the dimness of the most enlightened intellect, was afraid to decide hastily in his own favour, or to conclude that an author had written without meaning, because he could not immediately catch his ideas; he knew that the faults of books are often more justly imputable to the reader, who sometimes wants attention, and sometimes penetration; whose understanding is often obstructed by prejudice, and often dissipated by remissness: who comes sometimes to a new study, unfurnished with knowledge previously necessary; and finds difficulties insuperable, for want of ardour sufficient to encounter them.

Obscurity and clearness are relative terms: to some readers scarce any book is easy, to others not many are difficult: and surely they, whom neither any exuberant praise bestowed by others, nor any eminent conquests over stubborn problems, have entitled to exalt themselves above the common orders of mankind, might condescend to imitate the candour of Socrates; and where they find incontestable proofs of superior genius, be content to think that there is justness in the connexion which they cannot trace, and cogency in the reasoning which they cannot comprehend.

This diffidence is never more reasonable than in the perusal of the authors of antiquity; of those whose works have been the delight of ages, and transmitted as the great inheritance of mankind from one generation to another: surely, no man can, without the utmost arrogance, imagine that he brings any superiority of understanding to the perusal of these books which have been preserved in the devastation of cities, and snatched up from the wreck of nations; which those who fled before barbarians have been careful to carry off in the hurry of migration, and of which barbarians have repented the destruction. If in books thus made venerable by the uniform attestation of successive ages, any passages shall appear unworthy of that praise which they have formerly received, let us not immediately determine, that they owed their reputation to dulness or bigotry; but suspect at least that our ancestors had some reasons for their opinions, and that our ignorance of those reasons makes us differ from them.

It often happens that an author's reputation is endangered in succeeding times, by that which raised the loudest applause among his contemporaries: nothing is read with greater pleasure than allusions to recent facts, reigning opinions, or present controversies; but when facts are forgotten, and controversies extinguished, these favourite touches lose all their graces; and the author in his descent to posterity must be left to the mercy of chance, without any power of ascertaining the memory of those things, to which he owed his luckiest thoughts and his kindest reception.

On such occasions, every reader should remember the diffidence of Socrates, and repair by his candour the injuries of time: he should impute the seeming defects of his author to some chasm of intelligence, and suppose that the sense which is now weak was once forcible, and the expression which is now dubious formerly determinate.

How much the mutilation of ancient history has taken away from the beauty of poetical performances, may be conjectured from the light which a lucky commentator sometimes effuses, by the recovery of an incident that had been long forgotten: thus, in the third book of Horace, Juno's denunciations against those that should presume to raise again the walls of Troy, could for many ages please only by splendid images and swelling language, of which no man discovered the use or propriety, till Le Fevre, by showing on what occasion the Ode was written, changed wonder to rational delight. Many passages yet undoubtedly remain in the same author, which an exacter knowledge of the incidents of his time would clear from objections. Among these I have always numbered the following lines:

Aurum per medios ire satellites,
Et perrumpere amat saxa, potentius
Ictu fulmineo. Concidit Auguris
Argivi domus ob lucrum
Demersa excidio. Diffidit urbium
Portas vir Macedo, et subruit æmulos
Reges muneribus. Munera navium
Sævos illaqueant duces.

Stronger than thunder's winged force,
All-powerful gold can spread its course,
Through watchful guards its passage make.
And loves through solid walls to break:
From gold the overwhelming woes
That crush'd the Grecian augur rose
Philip with gold through cities broke,
And rival monarchs felt his yoke;
Captains of ships to gold are slaves,
Though fierce as their own winds and waves.
FRANCIS

The close of this passage, by which every reader is now disappointed and offended, was probably the delight of the Roman Court: it cannot be imagined, that Horace, after having given to gold the force of thunder, and told of its power to storm cities and to conquer kings, would have concluded his account of its efficacy with its influence over naval commanders, had he not alluded to some fact then current in the mouths of men, and therefore more interesting for a time than the conquests of Philip. Of the like kind may be reckoned another stanza in the same book:

——Jussa coram non sine conscio
Surgit marito, seu vocat institor
Seu navis Hispanæ magister
Dedecorum pretiosus emptor

The conscious husband bids her rise,
When some rich factor courts her charms,
Who calls the wanton to his arms,
And, prodigal of wealth and fame,
Profusely buys the costly shame.
FRANCIS.

He has little knowledge of Horace who imagines that the *factor*, or the *Spanish merchant*, are mentioned by chance: there was undoubtedly some popular story of an intrigue, which those names recalled to the memory of his reader.

The flame of his genius in other parts, though somewhat dimmed by time, is not totally eclipsed; his address and judgment yet appear, though much of the spirit and vigour of his sentiment is lost: this has happened to the twentieth Ode of the first book;

Vile patabis modicis Sabinum
Cantharis, Græca quod ego ipse testa
Conditum levi; datus in theatro
Cum tibi plausus,
Care Mæcenas eques. Ut paterni
Fluminis ripæ, simul et jocosa
Redderet laudes tibi Vaticani
Montis imago.

A poet's beverage humbly cheap,
(Should great Mæcenas be my guest)
The vintage of the Sabine grape.
But yet in sober cups shall crown the feast:
'Twas rack'd into a Grecian cask,
Its rougher juice to melt away:
I seal'd it too—a pleasing task!
With annual joy to mark the glorious day,
When in applausive shouts thy name
Spread from the theatre around,
Floating on thy own Tiber's stream,
And Echo, playful nymph, return'd the sound.
FRANCIS.

We here easily remark the intertexture of a happy compliment with an humble invitation; but certainly are less delighted than those, to whom the mention of the applause bestowed upon Mæcenas gave occasion to recount the actions or words that produced it.

Two lines which have exercised the ingenuity of modern critics, may, I think, be reconciled to the judgment, by an easy supposition: Horace thus addresses Agrippa:

Scriberis Vario fortis, et hostium
Victor, Mæonii carminis alite.

Varius a *swan of Homer's wing*,
Shall brave Agrippa's conquests sing.

That Varius should be called "A bird of Homeric song," appears so harsh to modern ears, that an emendation of the text has been proposed; but surely the learning of the ancients had been long ago obliterated, had every man thought himself at liberty to corrupt the lines which he did not understand. If we imagine that Varius had been by any of his cotemporaries celebrated under the appellation of *Musarum Ales*, the swan of the Muses, the language of Horace becomes graceful and familiar; and that such a compliment was at least possible, we know from the transformation feigned by Horace of himself.

The most elegant compliment that was paid to Addison, is of this obscure and perishable kind:

When panting Virtue her last efforts made.
You brought your Clio to the virgin's aid.

These lines must please as long as they are understood; but can be understood only by those that have observed Addison's signatures in the Spectator.

The nicety of these minute allusions I shall exemplify by another instance, which I take this occasion to mention, because, as I am told, the commentators have omitted it. Tibullus addresses Cynthia in this manner:

Te spectum, suprema mihi cum venerit hora
Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.

Before my closing eyes dear Cynthia stand,
Held weakly by my fainting trembling hand

To these lines Ovid thus refers in his elegy on the death of Tibullus:

Cynthia decedens, felicius, inquit, amata
Sum tibi; vixisti dum tuus ignis eram.
Cui Nemesis, quid, ait, tibi sunt mea damna dolori
Me tenuit moriens deficiente manu.

Blest was my reign, retiring Cynthia cried;
Nor till he left my breast, Tibullus died.
Forbear, said Nemesis, my loss to moan,
The fainting trembling hand was mine alone.

The beauty of this passage, which consists in the appropriation made by Nemesis of the line originally directed to Cynthia, had been wholly imperceptible to succeeding ages, had chance, which has destroyed so many greater volumes, deprived us likewise of the poems of Tibullus.

No 62.] SATURDAY, JUNE. 9, 1753

O fortuna viris invida fortibus,
Quam nan æqua bonis præmia dividis. SENEC

Capricious Fortune ever joys,
With partial hand to deal the prize,
To crush the brave, and cheat the wise

TO THE ADVENTURER

Fleet, June 6.

SIR,

To the account of such of my companions as are imprisoned without being miserable, or are miserable without any claim to compassion; I promised to add the histories of those, whose virtue has made them unhappy, or whose misfortunes are at least without a crime. That this catalogue should be very numerous, neither you nor your readers ought to expect: "*rari quippe boni*;" "the good men are few." Virtue is uncommon in all the classes of humanity; and I suppose it will scarcely be imagined more frequent in a prison than in other places.

Yet in these gloomy regions is to be found the tenderness, the generosity, the philanthropy of Serenus, who might have lived in competence and ease, if he could have looked without emotion on the miseries of another. Serenus was one of those exalted minds, whom knowledge and sagacity could not make suspicious; who poured out his soul in boundless intimacy, and thought community of possessions the law of friendship. The friend of Serenus was arrested for debt, and after many endeavours to soften his creditor, sent his wife to solicit that assistance which never was refused. The tears and importunity of female distress were more than was necessary to move the heart of Serenus; he hasted immediately away, and conferring a long time with his friend, found him confident that if the present pressure was taken off, he should soon be able to re-establish his affairs. Serenus, accustomed to believe, and afraid to aggravate distress, did not attempt to detect the fallacies of hope, nor reflect that every man overwhelmed with calamity, believes, that if that was removed he shall immediately be happy; he, therefore, with little hesitation offered himself as surety.

In the first raptures of escape all was joy, gra

titude, and confidence; the friend of Serenus displayed his prospects, and counted over the sums of which he should infallibly be master before the day of payment. Serenus in a short time began to find his danger, but could not prevail with himself to repent of beneficence: and therefore suffered himself still to be amused with projects which he durst not consider, for fear of finding them impracticable. The debtor, after he had tried every method of raising money which art or indigence could prompt, wanted either fidelity or resolution to surrender himself to prison, and left Serenus to take his place.

Serenus has often proposed to the creditor, to pay him whatever he shall appear to have lost by the flight of his friend: but however reasonable this proposal may be thought, avarice and brutality have been hitherto inexorable, and Serenus still continues to languish in prison.

In this place, however, where want makes almost every man selfish, or desperation gloomy, it is the good fortune of Serenus not to live without a friend; he passes most of his hours in the conversation of Candidus, a man whom the same virtuous ductility has, with some difference of circumstances, made equally unhappy. Candidus, when he was young, helpless, and ignorant, found a patron that educated, protected, and supported him: his patron being more vigilant for others than himself, left at his death an only son, destitute and friendless. Candidus was eager to repay the benefits he had received; and having maintained the youth for a few years at his own house, afterwards placed him with a merchant of eminence, and gave bonds to a great value as a security for his conduct.

The young man, removed too early from the only eye of which he dreaded the observation, and deprived of the only instruction which he heard with reverence, soon learned to consider virtue as restraint, and restraint as oppression; and to look with a longing eye at every expense to which he could not reach, and every pleasure which he could not partake: by degrees he deviated from his first regularity, and unhappily mingling among young men busy in dissipating the gains of their father's industry, he forgot the precepts of Candidus, spent the evening in parties of pleasure, and the morning in expedients to support his riots. He was, however, dexterous and active in business; and his master, being secured against any consequences of dishonesty, was very little solicitous to inspect his manners, or to inquire how he passed those hours, which were not immediately devoted to the business of his profession: when he was informed of the young man's extravagance or debauchery, "let his bondsman look to that," said he, "I have taken care of myself."

Thus the unhappy spendthrift proceeded from folly to folly, and from vice to vice, with the connivance if not the encouragement of his master; till in the heat of a nocturnal revel he committed such violences in the street as drew upon him a criminal prosecution. Guilty and unexperienced, he knew not what course to take; to confess his crime to Candidus, and solicit his interposition, was little less dreadful than to stand before the frown of a court of justice. Having, therefore, passed the day with anguish in his heart, and distraction in his looks, he seized at night a very large sum of money in the compting house, and setting out he knew not whither, was heard of no more.

The consequence of his flight was the ruin of Candidus: ruin surely undeserved and irreproachable, and such as the laws of a just government ought either to prevent or repair; nothing is more inequitable than that one man should suffer for the crimes of another, for crimes which he neither prompted nor permitted, which he could neither foresee nor prevent. When we consider the weakness of human resolutions and the inconsistency of human conduct, it must appear absurd that one man shall engage for another, that he will not change his opinions or alter his conduct.

It is, I think, worthy of consideration, whether, since no wager is binding without a possibility of loss on each side, it is not equally reasonable, that no contract should be valid without reciprocal stipulations; but in this case, and others of the same kind, what is stipulated on his side to whom the bond is given? he takes advantage of the security, neglects his affairs, omits his duty, suffers timorous wickedness to grow daring by degrees, permits appetite to call for new gratifications, and, perhaps, secretly longs for the time in which he shall have power to seize the forfeiture; and if virtue or gratitude should prove too strong for temptation, and a young man persist in honesty, however instigated by his passions, what can secure him at last against a false accusation? I for my part always shall suspect, that he who can by such methods secure his property, will go one step farther to increase it; nor can I think that man safely trusted with the means of mischief, who by his desire to have them in his hands, gives an evident proof how much less he values his neighbour's happiness than his own.

Another of our companions is Lentulus, a man whose dignity of birth was very ill supported by his fortune. As some of the first offices in the kingdom were filled by his relations, he was early invited to court, and encouraged by caresses and promises to attendance and solicitation: a constant appearance in splendid company, necessarily required magnificence of dress; and a frequent participation of fashionable amusements forced him into expense: but these measures were requisite to his success: since every body knows, that to be lost to sight is to be lost to remembrance, and that he who desires to fill a vacancy, must be always at hand, lest some man of greater vigilance should step in before him.

By this course of life his little fortune was every day made less: but he received so many distinctions in public, and was known to resort so familiarly to the houses of the great, that every man looked on his preferment as certain, and believed that its value would compensate for its slowness: he, therefore, found no difficulty in obtaining credit for all that his rank or his vanity made necessary: and, as ready payment was not expected, the bills were proportionably enlarged, and the value of the hazard or delay were adjusted solely by the equity of the creditor. At length death deprived Lentulus of one of his patrons, and a revolution in the ministry of another; so that all his prospects vanished at once, and those that had before encouraged his expenses, began to perceive that their money

was in danger; there was now no other contention but who should first seize upon his person, and by foreing immediate payment, deliver him up naked to the vengeance of the rest. In pursuance of this scheme, one of them invited him to a tavern, and procured him to be arrested at the door; but Lentulus, instead of endeavouring secretly to pacify him by payment, gave notice to the rest, and offered to divide amongst them the remnant of his fortune: they feasted six hours at his expense, to deliberate on his proposal: and at last determined that as he could not offer more than five shillings in the pound, it would be more prudent to keep him in prison, till he could procure from his relations the payment of his debts.

Lentulus is not the only man confined within these walls, on the same account; the like procedure, upon the like motives, is common among men whom yet the law allows to partake the use of fire and water with the compassionate and the just; who frequent the assemblies of commerce in open day, and talk with detestation and contempt of highwaymen or housebreakers: but, surely, that man must be confessedly robbed, who is compelled, by whatever means, to pay the debts which he does not owe: nor can I look with equal hatred upon him, who, at the hazard of his life, holds out his pistol and demands my purse, as on him who plunders under shelter of the law, and by detaining my son or my friend in prison, extorts from me the price of their liberty. No man can be more an enemy to society than he, by whose machinations our virtues are turned to our disadvantage; he is less destructive to mankind that plunders cowardice, than he that preys upon compassion.

I believe, Mr. Adventurer, you will readily confess, that though not one of these, if tried before a commercial judicature, can be wholly acquitted from imprudence or temerity; yet that, in the eye of all who can consider virtue as distinct from wealth, the fault of two of them, at least, is outweighed by the merit; and that of the third is so much extenuated by the circumstances of his life, as not to deserve a perpetual prison: yet must these, with multitudes equally blameless, languish in confinement, till malevolence shall relent, or the law be changed. I am, Sir, your humble servant.

MISARGYRUS.

No. 67.] TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1753.

Inventas—vitam excoluere per artes. VIRG.

They polish life by useful arts.

THAT familiarity produces neglect, has been long observed. The effect of all external objects, however great or splendid, ceases with their novelty; the courtier stands without emotion in the royal presence; the rustic tramples under his foot the beauties of the spring with little attention to their colours or their fragrance; and the inhabitant of the coast darts his eye upon the immense diffusion of waters, without awe, wonder, or terror.

Those who have passed much of their lives in this great city, look upon its opulence and its multitudes, its extent and variety, with cold indifference; but an inhabitant of the remoter parts of the kingdom is immediately distinguished by a kind of dissipated curiosity, a busy endeavour to divide his attention amongst a thousand objects, and a wild confusion of astonishment and alarm.

The attention of a new comer is generally first struck by the multiplicity of cries that stun him in the streets, and the variety of merchandise and manufactures which the shopkeepers expose on every hand; and he is apt, by unwary bursts of admiration, to excite the merriment and contempt of those who mistake the use of their eyes for effects of their understanding, and confound accidental knowledge with just reasoning.

But, surely, these are subjects on which any man may without reproach employ his meditations: the innumerable occupations, among which the thousands that swarm in the streets of London are distributed, may furnish employment to minds of every cast, and capacities of every degree. He that contemplates the extent of this wonderful city, finds it difficult to conceive, by what method plenty is maintained in our markets, and how the inhabitants are regularly supplied with the necessaries of life; but when he examines the shops and warehouses, sees the immense stores of every kind of merchandise piled up for sale, and runs over all the manufactures of art and products of nature, which are every where attracting his eye and soliciting his purse, he will be inclined to conclude, that such quantities cannot easily be exhausted, and that part of mankind must soon stand still for want of employment, till the wares already provided shall be worn out and destroyed.

As Socrates was passing through the fair at Athens, and casting his eyes over the shops and customers "how many things are here," says he, "that I do not want!" The same sentiment is every moment rising in the mind of him that walks the streets of London, however inferior in philosophy to Socrates; he beholds a thousand shops crowded with goods, of which he can scarcely tell the use, and which, therefore, he is apt to consider as of no value: and, indeed, many of the arts by which families are supported, and wealth is heaped together, are of that minute and superfluous kind, which nothing but experience could evince possible to be prosecuted with advantage, and which, as the world might easily want, it could scarcely be expected to encourage.

But so it is, that custom, curiosity, or wantonness, supplies every art with patrons, and finds purchasers for every manufacture; the world is so adjusted, that not only bread, but riches may be obtained without great abilities or arduous performances; the most unskilful hand and unenlightened mind have sufficient incitements to industry; for he that is resolutely busy can scarcely be in want. There is, indeed, no employment, however despicable, from which a man may not promise himself more than competence, when he sees thousands and myriads raised to dignity, by no other merit than that of contributing to supply their neighbours with the means of sucking smoke through a tube of clay: and others raising contributions upon those, whose elegance disdains the grossness of smoky luxury, by grinding the same materials into a

powder that may at once gratify and impair the smell.

Not only by these popular and modish trifles, but by a thousand unheeded and evanescent kinds of business, are the multitudes of this city, preserved from idleness, and consequently from want. In the endless variety of tastes and circumstances that diversify mankind, nothing is so superfluous, but that some one desires it: or so common, but that some one is compelled to buy it. As nothing is useless but because it is in improper hands, what is thrown away by one is gathered up by another: and the refuse of part of mankind furnishes a subordinate class with the materials necessary to their support.

When I look round upon those who are thus variously exerting their qualifications, I cannot but admire the secret concatenation of society that links together the great and the mean, the illustrious and the obscure; and consider with benevolent satisfaction, that no man, unless his body or mind be totally disabled, has need to suffer the mortification of seeing himself useless or burdensome to the community: he that will diligently labour, in whatever occupation, will deserve the sustenance which he obtains, and the protection which he enjoys: and may lie down every night with the pleasing consciousness of having contributed something to the happiness of life.

Contempt and admiration are equally incident to narrow minds: he whose comprehension can take in the whole subordination of mankind, and whose perspicacity can pierce to the real state of things through the thin veils of fortune or of fashion, will discover meanness in the highest stations, and dignity in the meanest; and find that no man can become venerable but by virtue, or contemptible but by wickedness.

In the midst of this universal hurry, no man ought to be so little influenced by example, or so void of honest emulation, as to stand a lazy spectator of incessant labour; or please himself with the mean happiness of a drone, while the active swarms are buzzing about him; no man is without some quality, by the due application of which he might deserve well of the world; and whoever he be that has but little in his power, should be in haste to do that little, lest he be confounded with him that can do nothing.

By this general concurrence of endeavours, arts of every kind have been so long cultivated, that all the wants of man may be immediately supplied; idleness can scarcely form a wish which she may not gratify by the toil of others, or curiosity dream of a toy, which the shops are not ready to afford her.

Happiness is enjoyed only in proportion as it is known; and such is the state or folly of man, that it is known only by experience of its contrary: we who have long lived amidst the conveniences of a town immensely populous, have scarce an idea of a place where desire cannot be gratified by money. In order to have a just sense of this artificial plenty, it is necessary to have passed some time in a distant colony, or those parts of our island which are thinly inhabited: he that has once known how many trades every man in such situations is compelled to exercise, with how much labour the products of nature must be accommodated to human use, how long the loss or defect of any common utensil must be endured, or by what awkward expedients it must be supplied, how far men may wander with money in their hands before any can sell them what they wish to buy, will know how to rate at its proper value the plenty and ease of a great city.

But that the happiness of man may still remain imperfect, as wants in this place are easily supplied, new wants likewise are easily created; every man in surveying the shops of London, sees numberless instruments and conveniences, of which, while he did not know them, he, never felt the need; and yet, when use has made them familiar, wonders how life could be supported without them. Thus it comes to pass, that our desires always increase with our possessions; the knowledge that something remains yet unenjoyed, impairs our enjoyment of the good before us.

They who have been accustomed to the refinements of science, and multiplications of contrivance, soon lose their confidence in the unassisted powers of nature, forget the paucity of our real necessities, and overlook the easy methods by which they may be supplied. It were a speculation worthy of a philosophical mind, to examine how much is taken away from our native abilities, as well as added to them, by artificial expedients. We are so accustomed to give and receive assistance, that each of us singly can do little for himself; and there is scarce any one among us, however contracted may be his form of life, who does not enjoy the labour of a thousand artists.

But a survey of the various nations that inhabit the earth will inform us, that life may be supported with less assistance; and that the dexterity, which practice enforced by necessity produces, is able to effect much by very scanty means. The nations of Mexico and Peru erected cities and temples without the use of iron; and at this day the rude Indian supplies himself with all the necessaries of life: sent like the rest of mankind naked into the world, as soon as his parents have nursed him up to strength, he is to provide by his own labour for his own support. His first care is to find a sharp flint among the rocks; with this he undertakes to fell the trees of the forest; he shapes his bow, heads his arrows, builds his cottage, and hollows his canoe, and from that time lives in a state of plenty and prosperity; he is sheltered from the storms, he is fortified against beasts of prey, he is enabled to pursue the fish of the sea, and the deer of the mountains; and as he does not know, does not envy the happiness of polished nations, where gold can supply the want of fortitude and skill, and he whose laborious ancestors have made him rich, may lie stretched upon a couch, and see all the treasures of all the elements poured down before him.

This picture of a savage life, if it shows how much individuals may perform, shows likewise how much society is to be desired. Though the perseverance and address of the Indian excite our admiration, they nevertheless cannot procure him the conveniences which are enjoyed by the vagrant beggar of a civilized country: he hunts like a wild beast to satisfy his hunger: and when he lies down to rest after a successful chase, cannot pronounce himself secure against the danger of perishing in a few days; he is, perhaps, content with his condition, because he knows

that a better is attainable by man; as he that is born blind does not long for the perception of light, because he cannot conceive the advantages which light would afford him; but hunger, wounds, and weariness are real evils, though he believes them equally incident to all his fellow-creatures; and when a tempest compels him to lie starving in his hut, he cannot justly be concluded equally happy with those whom art has exempted from the power of chance, and who make the foregoing year provide for the following.

To receive and to communicate assistance, constitutes the happiness of human life; man may, indeed, preserve his existence in solitude, but can enjoy it only in society; the greatest understanding of an individual doomed to procure food and clothing for himself, will barely supply him with expedients to keep off death from day to day; but as one of a large community performing only his share of the common business, he gains leisure for intellectual pleasures, and enjoys the happiness of reason and reflection.

No. 69.] Tuesday, July 3, 1753.

Fere libenter homines id quod volunt credunt. Cæsar.

Men willingly believe what they wish to be true.

Tully has long ago observed, that no man however weakened by long life, is so conscious of his own decrepitude, as not to imagine that he may yet hold his station in the world for another year.

Of the truth of this remark every day furnishes new confirmation: there is no time of life, in which men for the most part seem less to expect the stroke of death, than when every other eye sees it impending; or are more busy in providing for another year, than when it is plain to all but themselves, that at another year they cannot arrive. Though every funeral that passes before their eyes evinces the deceitfulness of such expectations, since every man who is borne to the grave thought himself equally certain of living at least to the next year; the survivor still continues to flatter himself, and is never at a loss for some reason why his life should be protracted, and the voracity of death continue to be pacified with some other prey.

But this is only one of the innumerable artifices practised in the universal conspiracy of mankind against themselves; every age and every condition indulges some darling fallacy; every man amuses himself with projects which he knows to be improbable, and which, therefore, he resolves to pursue without daring to examine them. Whatever any man ardently desires, he very readily believes that he shall some time attain: he whose intemperance has overwhelmed him with diseases, while he languishes in the spring, expects vigour and recovery from the summer sun; and while he melts away in the summer, transfers his hopes to the frosts of winter: he that gazes upon elegance or pleasure, which want of money hinders him from imitating or partaking, comforts himself that the time of distress will soon be at an end, and that every day brings him nearer to a state of happiness; though he knows it has passed not only without acquisition of advantage, but perhaps without endeavours after it, in the formation of schemes that cannot be executed, and in the contemplation of prospects which cannot be approached.

Such is the general dream in which we all slumber out our time: every man thinks the day coming, in which he shall be gratified with all his wishes, in which he shall leave all those competitors behind, who are now rejoicing like himself in the expectation of victory; the day is always coming to the servile in which they shall be powerful, to the obscure in which they shall be eminent, and to the deformed in which they shall be beautiful.

If any of my readers has looked with so little attention on the world about him, as to imagine this representation exaggerated beyond probability, let him reflect a little upon his own life; let him consider what were his hopes and prospects ten years ago, and what additions he then expected to be made by ten years to his happiness: those years are now elapsed; have they made good the promise that was extorted from them, have they advanced his fortune, enlarged his knowledge, or reformed his conduct, to the degree that was once expected? I am afraid every man that recollects his hopes must confess his disappointment; and own that day has glided unprofitably after day, and that he is still at the same distance from the point of happiness.

With what consolations can those, who have thus miscarried in their chief design, elude the memory of their ill-success? with what amusements can they pacify their discontent, after the loss of so large a portion of life? They can give themselves up again to the same delusions, they can form new schemes of airy gratifications, and fix another period of felicity; they can again resolve to trust the promise which they know will be broken, they can walk in a circle with their eyes shut, and persuade themselves to think that they go forward.

Of every great and complicated event, part depends upon causes out of our power, and part must be effected by vigour and perseverance. With regard to that which is styled in common language the work of chance, men will always find reasons for confidence or distrust, according to their different tempers or inclinations; and he that has been long accustomed to please himself with possibilities of fortuitous happiness, will not easily or willingly be reclaimed from his mistake. But the effects of human industry and skill are more easily subjected to calculation; whatever can be completed in a year, is divisible into parts, of which each may be performed in the compass of a day; he, therefore, that has passed the day without attention to the task assigned him, may be certain, that the lapse of life has brought him no nearer to his object; for whatever idleness may expect from time, its produce will be only in proportion to the diligence with which it has been used. He that floats lazily down the stream, in pursuit of something borne along by the same current, will find himself indeed move forward; but unless he lays his hand to the oar, and increases his speed by his own labour, must be always at the same distance from that which he is following.

There have happened in every age some contingencies of unexpected and undeserved success, by which those who are determined to be-

lieve whatever favours their inclinations, have been encouraged to delight themselves with future advantages; they support confidence by considerations, of which the only proper use is to chase away despair: it is equally absurd to sit down in idleness because some have been enriched without labour, as to leap a precipice because some have fallen and escaped with life, or to put to sea in a storm because some have been driven from a wreck upon the coast to which they were bound.

We are all ready to confess, that belief ought to be proportioned to evidence or probability; let any man, therefore, compare the number of those who have been thus favoured by fortune, and of those who have failed of their expectations, and he will easily determine, with what justness he has registered himself in the lucky catalogue.

But there is no need on these occasions for deep inquiries or laborious calculations; there is a far easier method of distinguishing the hopes of folly from those of reason, of finding the difference between prospects that exist before the eyes, and those that are only painted on a fond imagination. Tom Drowsy had accustomed himself to compute the profit of a darling project till he had no longer any doubt of its success: it was at last matured by close consideration, all the measures were accurately adjusted, and he wanted only five hundred pounds to become master of a fortune that might be envied by a director of a trading company. Tom was generous and grateful, and was resolved to recompense this small assistance with an ample fortune: he, therefore, deliberated for a time, to whom amongst his friends he should declare his necessities; not that he suspected a refusal, but because he could not suddenly determine which of them would make the best use of riches, and was, therefore, most worthy of his favour. At last his choice was settled; and knowing that in order to borrow he must show the probability of repayment, he prepared for a minute and copious explanation of his project. But here the golden dream was at an end: he soon discovered the impossibility of imposing upon others the notions by which he had so long imposed upon himself; which way soever he turned his thoughts, impossibility and absurdity arose in opposition on every side; even credulity and prejudice were at last forced to give way, and he grew ashamed of crediting himself what shame would not suffer him to communicate to another.

To this test let every man bring his imaginations, before they have been too long predominant in his mind. Whatever is true will bear to be related, whatever is rational will endure to be explained; but when we delight to brood in secret over future happiness, and silently to employ our meditations upon schemes of which we are conscious that the bare mention would expose us to derision and contempt: we should then remember, that we are cheating ourselves by voluntary delusions: and giving up to the unreal mockeries of fancy, those hours in which solid advantages might be attained by sober thought and rational assiduity.

There is, indeed, so little certainty in human affairs, that the most cautious and severe examiner may be allowed to indulge some hopes which he cannot prove to be much favoured by probability; since, after his utmost endeavours to ascertain events, he must often leave the issue in the hands of chance. And so scanty is our present allowance of happiness, that in many situations life could scarcely be supported, if hope were not allowed to relieve the present hour by pleasures borrowed from futurity; and reanimate the languor of dejection to new efforts, by pointing to distant regions of felicity, which yet no resolution or perseverance shall ever reach.

But these, like all other cordials, though they may invigorate in a small quantity, intoxicate in a greater; these pleasures, like the rest, are lawful only in certain circumstances, and to certain degrees; they may be useful in a due subserviency to nobler purposes, but become dangerous and destructive when once they gain the ascendant in the heart: to soothe the mind to tranquillity by hope, even when that hope is likely to deceive us, may be sometimes useful; but to lull our faculties in a lethargy, is poor and despicable.

Vices and errors are differently modified, according to the state of the minds to which they are incident; to indulge hope beyond the warrant of reason, is the failure alike of mean and elevated understandings; but its foundation and its effects are totally different: the man of high courage and great abilities is apt to place too much confidence in himself, and to expect from a vigorous exertion of his powers more than spirit or diligence can attain; between him and his wish he sees obstacles indeed, but he expects to overleap or break them; his mistaken ardour hurries him forward; and though perhaps he misses his end, he nevertheless obtains some collateral good, and performs something useful to mankind and honourable to himself.

The drone of timidity presumes likewise to hope, but without ground and without consequence; the bliss with which he solaces his hours, he always expects from others, though very often he knows not from whom: he folds his arms about him, and sits in expectation of some revolution in the state that shall raise him to greatness, or some golden shower that shall load him with wealth; he dozes away the day in musing upon the morrow; and at the end of life is roused from his dream only to discover that the time of action is past, and that he can now show his wisdom only by repentance.

No. 74.] Saturday, July 21, 1753.

Insanientis dum sapienti
Consultus erro. Hor

I miss'd my end, and lost my way,
By crack-brain'd wisdom led astray.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Sir,

It has long been charged by one part of mankind upon the other, that they will not take advice; that counsel and instruction are generally thrown away; and that, in defiance both of admonition and example, all claim the right to choose their own measures, and to regulate their own lives.

That there is something in advice very useful

and salutary, seems to be equally confessed on all hands; since even those that reject it, allow for the most part that rejection to be wrong, but charge the fault upon the unskilful manner in which it is given: they admit the efficacy of the medicine, but abhor the nauseousness of the vehicle.

Thus mankind have gone on from century to century: some have been advising others how to act, and some have been teaching the advisers how to advise; yet very little alteration has been made in the world. As we must all by the law of nature enter life in ignorance, we must all make our way through it by the light of our own experience; and for any security that advice has been yet able to afford, must endeavour after success at the hazard of miscarriage, and learn to do right by venturing to do wrong.

By advice I would not be understood to mean, the everlasting and invariable principles of moral and religious truth, from which no change of external circumstances can justify any deviation; but such directions as respect merely the prudential part of conduct, and which may be followed or neglected without any violation of essential duties.

It is, indeed, not so frequently to make us good as to make us wise, that our friends employ the officiousness of counsel; and among the rejecters of advice, who are mentioned by the grave and sententious with so much acrimony, you will not so often find the vicious and abandoned, as the pert and the petulant, the vivacious and the giddy.

As the great end of female education is to get a husband, this likewise is the general subject of female advice; and the dreadful denunciation against those volatile girls, who will not listen patiently to the lectures of wrinkled wisdom, is, that they will die unmarried, or throw themselves away upon some worthless fellow, who will never be able to keep them a coach.

I being naturally of a ductile and easy temper, without strong desires or quick resentments, was always a favourite amongst the elderly ladies, because I never rebelled against seniority, nor could be charged with thinking myself wise before my time; but heard every opinion with submissive silence, professed myself ready to learn from all who seemed inclined to teach me, paid the same grateful acknowledgments for precepts contradictory to each other, and if any controversy arose, was careful to side with her who presided in the company.

Of this compliance I very early found the advantage; for my aunt Matilda left me a very large addition to my fortune, for this reason chiefly, as she herself declared, because I was not above hearing good counsel, but would sit from morning till night to be instructed, while my sister Sukey, who was a year younger than myself, and was, therefore, in greater want of information, was so much conceited of her own knowledge, that whenever the good lady in the ardour of benevolence reproved or instructed her, she would pout or titter, interrupt her with questions, or embarrass her with objections.

I had no design to supplant my sister by this complaisant attention; nor, when the consequence of my obsequiousness came to be known, did Sukey so much envy as despise me: I was, however, very well pleased with my success; and having received, from the concurrent opinion of all mankind, a notion that to be rich was to be great and happy, I thought I had obtained my advantages at an easy rate, and resolved to continue the same passive attention, since I found myself so powerfully recommended by it to kindness and esteem.

The desire of advising has a very extensive prevalence; and since advice cannot be given but to those that will hear it, a patient listener is necessary to the accommodation of all those who desire to be confirmed in the opinion of their own wisdom: a patient listener, however, is not always to be had; the present age, whatever age is present, is so vitiated and disordered, that young people are readier to talk than to attend, and good counsel is only thrown away upon those who are full of their own perfections.

I was, therefore, in this scarcity of good sense, a general favourite; and seldom saw a day in which some sober matron did not invite me to her house, or take me out in her chariot, for the sake of instructing me how to keep my character in this censorious age, how to conduct myself in the time of courtship, how to stipulate for a settlement, how to manage a husband of every character, regulate my family, and educate my children.

We are all naturally credulous in our own favour. Having been so often caressed and applauded for docility, I was willing to believe myself really enlightened by instruction, and completely qualified for the task of life. I did not doubt but I was entering the world with a mind furnished against all exigencies, with expedients to extricate myself from every difficulty, and sagacity to provide against every danger, I was therefore, in haste to give some specimen of my prudence, and to show that this liberality of instruction had not been idly lavished upon a mind incapable of improvement.

My purpose, for why should I deny it? was like that of other women, to obtain a husband of rank and fortune superior to my own; and in this I had the concurrence of all those that had assumed the province of directing me. That the woman was undone who married below herself, was universally agreed: and though some ventured to assert, that the richer man ought invariably to be preferred, and that money was a sufficient compensation for a defective ancestry; yet the majority declared warmly for a gentleman, and were of opinion that upstarts should not be encouraged.

With regard to other qualifications, I had an irreconcilable variety of instructions. I was sometimes told that deformity was no defect in a man; and that he who was not encouraged to intrigue by an opinion of his person, was more likely to value the tenderness of his wife: but a grave widow directed me to choose a man who might imagine himself agreeable to me, for that the deformed were always insupportably vigilant and apt to sink into sullenness, or burst into rage, if they found their wife's eye wandering for a moment to a good face or a handsome shape.

They were, however, all unanimous in warning me, with repeated cautions, against all thoughts of union with a wit, as a being with whom no happiness could possibly be enjoyed

men of every other kind I was taught to govern, but a wit was an animal for whom no arts of taming had been yet discovered: the woman whom he could once get within his power, was considered as lost to all hope of dominion or of quiet: for he would detect artifice and defeat allurement; and if once he discovered any failure of conduct, would believe his own eyes, in defiance of tears, caresses, and protestations.

In pursuance of these sage principles, I proceeded to form my schemes; and while I was yet in the first bloom of youth, was taken out at an assembly by Mr. Frisk. I am afraid my cheeks glowed, and my eyes sparkled; for I observed the looks of all my superintendents fixed anxiously upon me; and I was next day cautioned against him from all hands, as a man of the most dangerous and formidable kind, who had writ verses to one lady, and then forsaken her only because she could not read them, and had lampooned another for no other fault than defaming his sister.

Having been hitherto accustomed to obey, I ventured to dismiss Mr. Frisk, who happily did not think me worth the labour of a lampoon. I was then addressed by Mr. Sturdy, and congratulated by all my friends on the manors of which I was shortly to be lady: but Sturdy's conversation was so gross, that after the third visit I could endure him no longer; and incurred, by dismissing him, the censure of all my friends, who declared that my nicety was greater than my prudence, and that they feared it would be my fate at last to be wretched with a wit.

By a wit, however, I was never afterwards attacked, but lovers of every other class, or pretended lovers, I have often had; and notwithstanding the advice constantly given me, to have no regard in my choice to my own inclinations, I could not forbear to discard some for vice, and some for rudeness. I was once loudly censured for refusing an old gentleman who offered an enormous jointure, and died of the phthisic a year after; and was so baited with incessant importunities, that I should have given my hand to Drone the stock-jobber, had not the reduction of interest made him afraid of the expenses of matrimony.

Some indeed, I was permitted to encourage; but miscarried of the main end, by treating them according to the rules of art which had been prescribed me. Altilis, an old maid, infused into me so much haughtiness and reserve, that some of my lovers withdrew themselves from my frown, and returned no more, others were driven away, by the demands of settlement which the widow Trapland directed me to make; and I have learned, by many experiments, that to ask advice is to lose opportunity. I am sir, your humble servant,

PERDITA.

No. 81.] TUESDAY, AUG. 14, 1753.

Nil desperandum. HOR.

Avaunt despair.

I HAVE sometimes heard it disputed in conversation, whether it be more laudable or desirable, that a man should think too highly or too meanly of himself: it is on all hands agreed to be best, that he should think rightly; but since a fallible being will always make some deviations from exact rectitude, it is not wholly useless to inquire towards which side it is safer to decline.

The prejudices of mankind seem to favour him who errs by underrating his own powers: he is considered as a modest and harmless member of society, not likely to break the peace by competition, to endeavour after such splendour of reputation as may dim the lustre of others, or to interrupt any in the enjoyment of themselves; he is no man's rival, and, therefore, may be every man's friend.

The opinion which a man entertains of himself ought to be distinguished, in order to an accurate discussion of this question, as it relates to persons or to things. To think highly of ourselves in comparison with others, to assume by our own authority that precedence which none is willing to grant, must be always invidious and offensive; but to rate our powers high in proportion to things, and imagine ourselves equal to great undertakings, while we leave others in possession of the same abilities, cannot with equal justice provoke censure.

It must be confessed, that self-love may dispose us to decide too hastily in our own favour: but who is hurt by the mistake? If we are incited by this vain opinion to attempt more than we can perform, ours is the labour, and ours is the disgrace.

But he that dares to think well of himself, will not always prove to be mistaken; and the good effects of his confidence will then appear in great attempts and great performances: if he should not fully complete his design, he will at least advance it so far as to leave an easier task for him that succeeds him; and even though he should wholly fail, he will fail with honour.

But from the opposite error, from torpid despondency, can come no advantage; it is the frost of the soul, which binds up all its powers, and congeals life in perpetual sterility. He that has no hopes of success, will make no attempts; and where nothing is attempted, nothing can be done.

Every man should, therefore, endeavour to maintain in himself a favourable opinion of the powers of the human mind; which are, perhaps, in every man, greater than they appear, and might, by diligent cultivation, be exalted to a degree beyond what their possessor presumes to believe. There is scarce any man but has found himself able, at the instigation of necessity, to do what in a state of leisure and deliberation he would have concluded impossible; and some of our species have signalized themselves by such achievements, as prove that there are few things above human hope.

It has been the policy of all nations to preserve, by some public monuments, the memory of those who have served their country by great exploits: there is the same reason for continuing or reviving the names of those, whose extensive abilities have dignified humanity. An honest emulation may be alike excited; and the philosopher's curiosity may be inflamed by a catalogue of the works of Boyle or Bacon, as Themistocles was kept awake by the trophies of Miltiades.

Among the favourites of nature that have from time to time appeared in the world, enrich-

ed with various endowments and contrarieties of excellence, none seems to have been more exalted above the common rate of humanity, than the man known about two centuries ago by the appellation of the Admirable Crichton; of whose history, whatever we may suppress as surpassing credibility, yet we shall, upon incontestable authority, relate enough to rank him among prodigies.

"Virtue," says Virgil, "is better accepted when it comes in a pleasing form:" the person of Crichton was eminently beautiful; but his beauty was consistent with such activity and strength, that in fencing he would spring at one bound the length of twenty feet upon his antagonist; and he used the sword in either hand with such force and dexterity, that scarce any one had courage to engage him.

Having studied at St. Andrew's in Scotland, he went to Paris in his twenty-first year, and affixed on the gate of the college of Navarre a kind of challenge to the learned of that university to dispute with him on a certain day: offering to his opponents, whoever they should be the choice of ten languages, and of all the faculties and sciences. On the day appointed three thousand auditors assembled, when four doctors of the church and fifty masters appeared against him; and one of his antagonists confesses, that the doctors were defeated; that he gave proofs of knowledge above the reach of man; and that a hundred years passed without food or sleep, would not be sufficient for the attainment of his learning. After a disputation of nine hours, he was presented by the president and professors with a diamond and a purse of gold, and dismissed with repeated acclamations.

From Paris he went away to Rome, where he made the same challenge, and had in the presence of the Pope and cardinals the same success. Afterwards he contracted at Venice an acquaintance with Aldus Manutius, by whom he was introduced to the learned of that city: then visited Padua, where he engaged in another public disputation, beginning his performance with an extemporal poem in praise of the city and the assembly then present, and concluding with an oration equally unpremeditated in commendation of ignorance.

He afterwards published another challenge, in which he declared himself ready to detect the errors of Aristotle and all his commentators, either in the common forms of logic, or in any which his antagonists should propose of a hundred different kinds of verse.

These acquisitions of learning, however stupendous, were not gained at the expense of any pleasure which youth generally indulges, or by the omission of any accomplishment in which it becomes a gentleman to excel. He practised in great perfection the arts of drawing and painting, he was an eminent performer in both vocal and instrumental music, he danced with uncommon gracefulness, and on the day after his disputation at Paris exhibited his skill in horsemanship before the court of France, where at a public match of tilting, he bore away the ring upon his lance fifteen times together.

He excelled likewise in domestic games of less dignity and reputation: and, in the interval between his challenge and disputation at Paris, he spent so much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the Sorbonne, directing those that would see this monster of erudition, to look for him at the tavern.

So extensive was his acquaintance with life and manners, that in an Italian comedy composed by himself, and exhibited before the court of Mantua, he is said to have personated fifteen different characters: in all of which he might succeed without great difficulty, since he had such power of retention, that once hearing an oration of an hour, he would repeat it exactly, and in the recital follow the speaker through all his variety of tone and gesticulation.

Nor was his skill in arms less than in learning, or his courage inferior to his skill: there was a prize-fighter at Mantua, who travelling about the world, according to the barbarous custom of that age, as a general challenger, had defeated the most celebrated masters in many parts of Europe; and in Mantua, where he then resided, had killed three that appeared against him. The duke repented that he had granted him his protection; when Crichton, looking on his sanguinary success with indignation, offered to stake fifteen hundred pistoles, and mount the stage against him. The duke, with some reluctance, consented, and on the day fixed, the combatants appeared: their weapon seems to have been single rapier, which was then newly introduced in Italy. The prize-fighter advanced with great violence and fierceness, and Crichton contented himself calmly to ward his passes, and suffered him to exhaust his vigour by his own fury. Crichton then became the assailant; and pressed upon him with such force and agility, that he thrust him thrice through the body, and saw him expire; he then divided the prize he had won among the widows whose husbands had been killed.

The death of this wonderful man I should be willing to conceal, did I not know that every reader will inquire curiously after that fatal hour, which is common to all human beings, however distinguished from each other by nature or by fortune.

The duke of Mantua having received so many proofs of his various merit, made him tutor to his son Vicentio di Gozaga, a prince of loose manners and turbulent disposition. On this occasion it was, that he composed the comedy in which he exhibited so many different characters with exact propriety. But his honour was of short continuance: for as he was one night in the time of Carnival rambling about the streets, with his guitar in his hand, he was attacked by six men masked. Neither his courage nor skill in this exigence deserted him: he opposed them with such activity and spirit, that he soon dispersed them, and disarmed their leader, who throwing off his mask, discovered himself to be the prince his pupil. Crichton, falling on his knees, took his own sword by the point, and presented it to the prince; who immediately seized it, and instigated, as some say, by jealousy, according to others only by drunken fury and brutal resentment, thrust him through the heart.

Thus was the admirable Crichton brought into that state, in which he could excel the meanest of mankind only by a few empty honours paid to his memory: the court of Mantua testified their esteem by a public mourning, the contem-

porary wits were profuse of their encomiums, and the palaces of Italy were adorned with pictures, representing him on horseback, with a lance in one hand and a book in the other.

No. 84.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1753.

—— Tolle periculum,
Jam vaga prosilict frœnis natura remotis. HOR.

But take the danger and the shame away,
And vagrant nature bounds upon her prey FRANCIS

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IT has been observed, I think, by Sir William Temple, and after him by almost every other writer, that England affords a greater variety of characters than the rest of the world. This is ascribed to the liberty prevailing among us, which gives every man the privilege of being wise or foolish his own way, and preserves him from the necessity of hypocrisy or the servility of imitation.

That the position itself is true, I am not completely satisfied. To be nearly acquainted with the people of different countries can happen to very few; and in life, as in every thing else beheld at a distance, there appears an even uniformity: the petty discriminations which diversify the natural character, are not discoverable but by a close inspection; we, therefore, find them most at home, because there we have most opportunities of remarking them. Much less am I convinced, that this peculiar diversification, if it be real, is the consequence of peculiar liberty; for where is the government to be found that superintends individuals with so much vigilance, as not to leave their private conduct without restraint? Can it enter into a reasonable mind to imagine, that men of every other nation are not equally masters of their own time or houses with ourselves; and equally at liberty to be parsimonious or profuse, frolic or sullen, abstinent or luxurious? Liberty is certainly necessary to the full play of predominant humours; but such liberty is to be found alike under the government of the many or the few, in monarchies or in commonwealths.

How readily the predominant passion snatches an interval of liberty, and how fast it expands itself when the weight of restraint is taken away, I had lately an opportunity to discover, as I took a journey into the country in a stage coach, which, as every journey is a kind of adventure, may be very properly related to you, though I can display no such extraordinary assembly as Cervantes has collected at Don Quixote's inn.

In a stage coach, the passengers are for the most part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever meeting again when their journey is at an end; one should therefore imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the rest should form concerning him. Yet so it is that as all think themselves secure from detection, all assume that character of which they are most desirous, and on no occasion is the general ambition of superiority more apparently indulged.

On the day of our departure, in the twilight of the morning, I ascended the vehicle with three men and two women, my fellow-travellers. It was easy to observe the affected elevation of mien with which every one entered, and the supercilious civility with which they paid their compliments to each other. When the first ceremony was despatched, we sat silent for a long time, all employed in collecting importance into our faces, and endeavouring to strike reverence and submission into our companions.

It is always observable, that silence propagates itself, and that the longer talk has been suspended, the more difficult it is to find any thing to say. We began now to wish for conversation; but no one seemed inclined to descend from his dignity, or first propose a topic of discourse. At last a corpulent gentleman, who had equipped himself for this expedition with a scarlet surtout and a large hat with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looking on it in silence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I suppose, understood by all the company as an invitation to ask the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture; and his desire to be talking so far overcame his resentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was past five, and that in two hours we should be at breakfast.

His condescension was thrown away; we continued all obdurate; the ladies held up their heads; I amused myself with watching their behaviour; and of the other two, one seemed to employ himself in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes, and counterfeited a slumber. The man of benevolence, to show that he was not depressed by our neglect, hummed a tune, and beat time upon his snuff-box.

Thus universally displeased with one another, and not much delighted with ourselves, we came at last to the little inn appointed for our repast; and all began at once to recompense themselves for the constraint of silence, by innumerable questions and orders to the people that attended us. At last, what every one had called for was got, or declared impossible to be got at that time, and we were persuaded to sit round the same table; when the gentleman in the red surtout looked again upon his watch, told us that we had half an hour to spare, but he was sorry to see so little merriment among us; that all fellow travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himself one of the company. "I remember," says he, "it was on just such a morning as this, that I and my Lord Mumble and the duke of Tenterden were out upon a ramble: we called at a little house, as it might be this; and my landlady, I warrant you, not suspecting to whom she was talking, was so jocular and facetious, and made so many merry answers to our questions, that we were all ready to burst with laughter. At last the good woman happening to overhear me whisper the duke, and call him by this title, was so surprised and confounded, that we could scarcely get a word from her; and the duke never met me from that day to this, but he talks of the little house, and quarrels with me for terrifying the landlady."

He had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the veneration which this narrative must have procured him from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a distant part of the table, began to remark "the inconveniences of travelling, and the difficulty

which they who never sat at home without a great number of attendants, found in performing for themselves such offices as the road required; but that people of quality often travelled in disguise, and might be generally known from the vulgar by their condescension to poor innkeepers, and the allowance which they made for any defect in their entertainment; that for her part, while people were civil and meant well, it was never her custom to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a journey all that one enjoyed at one's own house."

A general emulation now seemed to be excited. One of the men who had hitherto said nothing, called for the last newspaper; and having perused it a while with deep pensiveness, "It is impossible," says he, "for any man to guess how to act with regard to the stocks; last week it was the general opinion that they would fall; and I sold out twenty thousand pounds in order to a purchase; they have now risen unexpectedly; and I make no doubt but at my return to London I shall risk thirty thousand pounds among them again."

A young man, who had hitherto distinguished himself only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diversion of his eyes from one object to another, upon this closed his snuff box, and told us that "he had a hundred times talked with the chancellor and the judges on the subject of the stocks; that for his part he did not pretend to be well acquainted with the principles on which they were established, but had always heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, uncertain in their produce, and unsolid in their foundation; and that he had been advised by three judges, his most intimate friends, never to venture his money in the funds, but to put it out upon land security, till he could light upon an estate in his own country."

It might be expected, that upon these glimpses of latent dignity, we should all have begun to look round us with veneration; and have behaved like the princes of romance, when the enchantment that disguises them is dissolved, and they discover the dignity of each other; yet it happened, that none of these hints made much impression on the company; every one was apparently suspected of endeavouring to impose false appearances upon the rest; all continued their haughtiness in hopes to enforce their claims; and all grew every hour more sullen, because they found their representations of themselves without effect.

Thus we travelled on four days with malevolence perpetually increasing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in supercilliousness and neglect; and when any two of us could separate ourselves for a moment, we vented our indignation at the sauciness of the rest.

At length the journey was at an end; and time and chance, that strip off all disguises, have discovered that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furnished a shop with the money he has saved; the man who deals so largely in the funds, is the clerk of a broker in 'Change-alley; the lady who so carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cookshop behind the Exchange; and the young man who is so happy in the friendship of the judges, engrosses and transcribes for bread in a garret of the Temple. Of one of the women only I could make no disadvantageous detection, because she had assumed no character, but accommodated herself to the scenes before her, without any struggle for distinction or superiority.

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practising a fraud, which, as the event showed, had been already practised too often to succeed, and by the success of which no advantage could have been obtained; of assuming a character, which was to end with the day; and of claiming upon false pretences honours which must perish with the breath that paid them.

But, Mr. Adventurer, let not those who laugh at me and my companions, think this folly confined to a stage coach. Every man in the journey of life takes the same advantage of the ignorance of his fellow travellers, disguises himself in counterfeit merit, and hears those praises with complacency, which his conscience reproaches him for accepting. Every man deceives himself, while he thinks he is deceiving others; and forgets that the time is at hand when every illusion shall cease, when fictitious excellence shall be torn away, and *all* must be shown to *all* in their real estate. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

VIATOR.

No. 85.] TUESDAY, AUG. 28, 1753.

Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer. HOR

The youth, who hopes th' Olympic prize to gain,
All arts must try, and every toil sustain. FRANCIS

IT is observed by Bacon, that "reading makes a full man, conversation a ready man, and writing an exact man."

As Bacon attained to degrees of knowledge scarcely ever reached by any other man, the directions which he gives for study have certainly a just claim to our regard; for who can teach an art with so great authority, as he that has practised it with undisputed success?

Under the protection of so great a name, I shall, therefore, venture to inculcate to my ingenious contemporaries, the necessity of reading, the fitness of consulting other understandings than their own, and of considering the sentiments and opinions of those who, however neglected in the present age, had in their own times, and many of them a long time afterwards, such reputation for knowledge and acuteness as will scarcely ever be attained by those that despise them.

An opinion has of late been, I know not how, propagated among us, that libraries are filled only with useless lumber; that men of parts stand in need of no assistance; and that to spend life in poring upon books, is only to imbibe prejudices, to obstruct and embarrass the powers of nature, to cultivate memory at the expense of judgment, and to bury reason under a chaos of indigested learning.

Such is the talk of many who think themselves wise, and of some who are thought wise by others; of whom part probably believe their own tenets, and part may be justly suspected of endeavouring to shelter their ignorance in multitudes, and of wishing to destroy that reputation which they have no hopes to share. It will, I believe, be

found invariably true, that learning was never decried by any learned man: and what credit can be given to those who venture to condemn that which they do not know?

If reason has the power ascribed to it by its advocates, if so much is to be discovered by attention and meditation, it is hard to believe, that so many millions, equally participating of the bounties of nature with ourselves, have been for ages upon ages meditating in vain: if the wits of the present time expect the regard of posterity, which will then inherit the reason which is now thought superior to instruction, surely they may allow themselves to be instructed by the reason of former generations. When, therefore, an author declares, that he has been able to learn nothing from the writings of his predecessors, and such a declaration has been lately made, nothing but a degree of arrogance unpardonable in the greatest human understanding, can hinder him from perceiving that he is raising prejudices against his own performance; for with what hopes of success can he attempt that in which greater abilities have hitherto miscarried? or with what peculiar force does he suppose himself invigorated, that difficulties hitherto invincible should give way before him?

Of those whom Providence has qualified to make any additions to human knowledge, the number is extremely small; and what can be added by each single mind, even of his superior class, is very little; the greatest part of mankind must owe all their knowledge, and all must owe far the larger part of it, to the information of others. To understand the works of celebrated authors, comprehend their systems, and retain their reasonings, is a task more than equal to common intellects; and he is by no means to be accounted useless or idle, who has stored his mind with acquired knowledge, and can detail it occasionally to others who have less leisure or weaker abilities.

Persius has justly observed, that knowledge is nothing to him who is not known by others to possess it: to the scholar himself it is nothing with respect either to honour or advantage, for the world cannot reward those qualities which are concealed from it; with respect to others it is nothing, because it affords no help to ignorance or error.

It is with justice, therefore, that in an accomplished character, Horace unites just sentiments with the power of expressing them; and he that has once accumulated learning, is next to consider, how he shall most widely diffuse and most agreeably impart it.

A ready man is made by conversation. He that buries himself among his manuscripts "besprent," as Pope expresses it, "with learned dust," and wears out his days and nights in perpetual research and solitary meditation, is too apt to lose in his elocution what he adds to his wisdom; and when he comes into the world, to appear overloaded with his own notions, like a man armed with weapons which he cannot wield. He has no facility of inculcating his speculations, of adapting himself to the various degrees of intellect which the accidents of conversation will present; but will talk to most unintelligibly, and to all unpleasantly.

I was once present at the lectures of a profound philosopher, a man really skilled in the science which he professed, who having occasion to explain the terms *opacum* and *pellucidum*, told us, after some hesitation, that *opacum* was, as one might say, *opake*, and that *pellucidum* signified *pellucid*. Such was the dexterity with which this learned reader facilitated to his auditors the intricacies of science; and so true is it that a man may know what he cannot teach.

Boerhaave complains, that the writers who have treated of chymistry before him, are useless to the greater part of students, because they presuppose their readers to have such degrees of skill as are not often to be found. Into the same error are all men apt to fall, who have familiarized any subject to themselves in solitude: they discourse, as if they thought every other man had been employed in the same inquiries; and expect that short hints and obscure allusions will produce in others the same strain of ideas which they excite in themselves.

Nor is this the only inconvenience which the man of study suffers from a recluse life. When he meets with an opinion that pleases him, he catches it up with eagerness; looks only after such arguments as tend to his confirmation; or spares himself the trouble of discussion, and adopts it with very little proof; indulges it long without suspicion, and in time unites it to the general body of his knowledge, and treasures it up among incontestable truths; but when he comes into the world among men who, arguing upon dissimilar principles, have been led to different conclusions, and being placed in various situations, view the same object on many sides; he finds his darling position attacked, and himself in no condition to defend it: having thought always in one train, he is in the state of a man who having fenced always with the same master, is perplexed and amazed by a new posture of his antagonist; he is entangled in unexpected difficulties, he is harassed by sudden objections, he is unprovided with solutions or replies: his surprise impedes his natural powers of reasoning, his thoughts are scattered and confounded, and he gratifies the pride of airy petulance, with an easy victory.

It is difficult to imagine, with what obstinacy truths which one mind perceives almost by intuition, will be rejected by another, and how many artifices must be practised, to procure admission for the most evident propositions into understandings frighted by their novelty, or hardened against them by accidental prejudice; it can scarcely be conceived, how frequently, in these extemporaneous controversies, the dull will be subtle, and the acute absurd; how often stupidity will elude the force of argument, by involving itself in its own gloom; and mistaken ingenuity will weave artful fallacies, which reason can scarcely find means to disentangle.

In these encounters the learning of the recluse usually fails him: nothing but long habit and frequent experiments can confer the power of changing a position into various forms, presenting it in different points of view, connecting it with known and granted truths, fortifying it with intelligible arguments, and illustrating it by apt similitudes; and he, therefore, that has collected his knowledge in solitude, must learn its application by mixing with mankind.

But while the various opportunities of conversation invite us to try every mode of argument,

and every art of recommending our sentiments, we are frequently betrayed to the use of such as are not in themselves strictly defensible: a man heated in talk, and eager of victory, takes advantage of the mistakes or ignorance of his adversary, lays hold of concessions to which he knows he has no right, and urges proofs likely to prevail on his opponent, though he knows himself that they have no force: thus the severity of reason is relaxed, many topics are accumulated, but without just arrangement or distinction; we learn to satisfy ourselves with such ratiocination as silences others; and seldom recall to a close examination, that discourse which has gratified our vanity with victory and applause.

Some caution, therefore, must be used lest copiousness and facility be made less valuable by inaccuracy and confusion. To fix the thoughts by writing, and subject them to frequent examinations and reviews, is the best method of enabling the mind to detect its own sophisms, and keep it on guard against the fallacies which it practises on others: in conversation we naturally diffuse our thoughts, and in writing we contract them; method is the excellence of writing, and unconstraint the grace of conversation.

To read, write, and converse in due proportions, is, therefore, the business of a man of letters. For all these there is not often equal opportunity; excellence, therefore, is not often attainable; and most men fail in one or other of the ends proposed, and are full without readiness, or ready without exactness. Some deficiency must be forgiven all, because all are men; and more must be allowed to pass uncensured in the greater part of the world, because none can confer upon himself abilities, and few have the choice of situations proper for the improvement of those which nature has bestowed: it is, however, reasonable to have *perfection* in our eye; that we may always advance towards it, though we know it never can be reached.

No. 92.] SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 1753.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti. HOR.

Bold be the critic, zealous to his trust,
Like the firm judge inexorably just.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IN the papers of criticism which you have given to the public, I have remarked a spirit of candour and love of truth, equally remote from bigotry and captiousness: a just distribution of praise amongst the ancients and the moderns: a sober deference to reputation long established, without a blind adoration of antiquity; and a willingness to favour later performances without a light or puerile fondness for novelty.

I shall, therefore, venture to lay before you, such observations as have risen to my mind in the consideration of Virgil's pastorals, without any inquiry how far my sentiments deviate from established rules or common opinions.

If we survey the ten pastorals in a general view, it will be found that Virgil can derive from them very little claim to the praise of an inventor. To search into the antiquity of this kind of poetry, is not my present purpose; that it has long subsisted in the east, the *Sacred Writings* sufficiently inform us; and we may conjecture, with great probability, that it was sometimes the devotion, and sometimes the entertainment, of the first generations of mankind. Theocritus united elegance with simplicity; and taught his shepherds to sing with so much ease and harmony that his countrymen, despairing to excel, forbore to imitate him; and the Greeks, however vain or ambitious, left him in quiet possession of the garlands which the wood nymphs had bestowed upon him.

Virgil, however, taking advantage of another language, ventured to copy or to rival the *Sicilian bard:* he has written with greater splendour of diction, and elevation of sentiment: but as the magnificence of his performances was more, the simplicity was less; and perhaps, where he excels Theocritus, he sometimes obtains his superiority by deviating from the pastoral character, and performing what Theocritus never attempted.

Yet, though I would willingly pay to Theocritus the honour which is always due to an original author, I am far from intending to depreciate Virgil; of whom Horace justly declares, that the rural muses have appropriated to him their elegance and sweetness, and who, as he copied Theocritus in his design, has resembled him likewise in his success; for, if we except Calphurnius, an obscure author of the lower ages, I know not that a single pastoral was written after him by any poet, till the revival of literature.

But though his general merit has been universally acknowledged, I am far from thinking all the productions of his rural Thalia equally excellent; there is, indeed, in all his pastorals a strain of versification which it is vain to seek in any other poet; but if we except the first and the tenth, they seem liable either wholly or in part to considerable objections.

The second, though we should forget the great charge against it, which I am afraid can never be refuted, might, I think, have perished without any diminution of the praise of its author; for I know not that it contains one affecting sentiment or pleasing description, or one passage that strikes the imagination or awakens the passions.

The third contains a contest between two shepherds, begun with a quarrel of which some particulars might well be spared, carried on with sprightliness and elegance, and terminated at last in a reconciliation: but, surely, whether the invectives with which they attack each other be true or false, they are too much degraded from the dignity of pastoral innocence; and instead of rejoicing that they are both victorious, I should not have grieved could they have been both defeated.

The Poem to Pollio is indeed of another kind: it is filled with images at once splendid and pleasing, and it is elevated with grandeur of language worthy of the first of Roman poets, but I am not able to reconcile myself to the disproportion between the performance and the occasion that produced it: that the golden age should return because Pollio had a son, appears so wild a fiction, that I am ready to suspect the poet of having written for some other purpose, what he took this opportunity of producing to the public.

The fifth contains a celebration of Daphnis, which has stood to all succeeding ages as the model of pastoral elegies. To deny praise to

performance which so many thousands have laboured to imitate, would be to judge with too little deference for the opinion of mankind: yet whoever shall read it with impartiality, will find that most of the images are of the mythological kind, and therefore easily invented; and that there are few sentiments of rational praise or natural lamentation.

In the Silenus he again rises to the dignity of philosophic sentiments, and heroic poetry. The address to Varus is eminently beautiful; but since the compliment paid to Gallus fixes the transaction to his own time, the fiction of Silenus seems injudicious: nor has any sufficient reason yet been found, to justify his choice of those fables that make the subject of the song.

The seventh exhibits another contest of the tuneful shepherds: and, surely, it is not without some reproach to his inventive power, that of ten pastorals, Virgil has written two upon the same plan. One of the shepherds now gains an acknowledged victory, but without any apparent superiority, and the reader when he sees the prize adjudged, is not able to discover how it was deserved.

Of the eighth pastoral, so little is properly the work of Virgil, that he has no claim to other praise or blame than that of a translator.

Of the ninth it is scarce possible to discover the design or tendency: it is said, I know not upon what authority, to have been composed from fragments of other poems: and except a few lines in which the author touches upon his own misfortunes, there is nothing that seems appropriated to any time or place, or of which any other use can be discovered than to fill up the poem.

The first and the tenth pastorals, whatever be determined of the rest, are sufficient to place their author above the reach of rivalry. The complaint of Gallus disappointed in his love, is full of such sentiments as disappointed love naturally produces: his wishes are wild, his resentment is tender; and his purposes are inconstant. In the genuine language of despair, he soothes himself awhile with the pity that shall be paid him after his death.

——— *Tamen cantabitis, Arcades, inquit,*
Montibus hæc vestris; soli cantare periti
Arcades. O mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant.
Vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores!

———Yet, O Arcadian swains,
Ye best artificers of soothing strains!
Tune your soft reeds, and teach your rocks my woes,
So shall my shade in sweeter rest repose.
O that your birth and business had been mine;
To feed the flock, and prune the spreading vine!
WARTON.

Discontented with his present condition, and desirous to be any thing but what he is, he wishes himself one of the shepherds. He then catches the idea of rural tranquillity; but soon discovers how much happier he should be in these happy regions, with Lycoris at his side:

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia, prata Lycori:
Hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer ævo.
Nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis,
Tela inter media, atque adversos detinet hostes.
Tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere) tantum
Alpinas, ah dura! nives, et frigora Rheni
Me sine sola vides. Ah te ne frigora lædant!
Ah tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!

Here cooling fountains roll through flowery meads,
Here woods, Lycoris, lift their verdant heads;
Here could I wear my careless life away,
And in thy arms insensibly decay.
Instead of that, me frantic love detains,
'Mid foes, and dreadful darts, and bloody plains:
While you—and can my soul the tale believe,
Far from your country, lonely wandering leave
Me, me your lover, barbarous fugitive!
Seek the rough Alps where snows eternal shine,
And joyless borders of the frozen Rhine.
Ah! may no cold e'er blast my dearest maid,
Nor pointed ice thy tender feet invade. WARTON.

He then turns his thoughts on every side, in quest of something that may solace or amuse him; he proposes happiness to himself, first in one scene and then in another: and at last finds that nothing will satisfy:

Jam neque Hamaryades rursum, nec carmina vobis
Ipsa placent: ipsæ rursum concedite sylvæ.
Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores;
Nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hyemis subeamus aquosæ
Nec si, cum moriens alta liber arbor et in ulmo,
Æthiopum versemus oves sub sidere Cancri.
Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori.

But now again no more the woodland maids,
Nor pastoral songs delight—Farewell, ye shades
No toils of ours the cruel god can change,
Though lost in frozen deserts we should range;
Though we should drink where chilling Hebrus flows,
Endure bleak winter blasts, and Thracian snows.
Or on hot India's plains our flocks should feed,
Where the parch'd elm declines his sickening head,
Beneath fierce-glowing Cancer's fiery beams,
Far from cool breezes and refreshing streams.
Love over all maintains resistless sway,
And let us love's all-conquering power obey.
WARTON.

But notwithstanding the excellence of the tenth pastoral, I cannot forbear to give the preference to the first, which is equally natural and more diversified. The complaint of the shepherd, who saw his old companion at ease in the shade, while himself was driving his little flock he knew not whither, is such as, with variation of circumstances, misery always utters at the sight of prosperity:

Nos patriæ fines, et dulcia linquimus arva:
Nos patriam fugimus: tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra,
Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas.

We leave our country's bounds, our much-loved plains,
We from our country fly, unhappy swains!
You, Tit'rus, in the groves at leisure laid,
Teach Amaryllis' name to every shade. WARTON.

His account of the difficulties of his journey, gives a very tender image of pastoral distress:

——— *En! ipse capellas*
Protenus æger ago: hanc etiam vix, Tityre, duco
Hic inter densas corylos modo namque gemellos,
Spem gregis, ah! silice in nuda connixa reliquit.

And, lo! sad partner of the general care,
Weary and faint I drive my goats afar!
While scarcely this my leading hand sustains,
Tired with the way, and recent from her pains;
For 'mid yon tangled hazels as we past,
On the bare flints her hapless twin she cast,
The hopes and promise of my ruin'd fold! WARTON.

The description of Virgil's happiness in his little farm, combines almost all the images of rural pleasure; and he, therefore, that can read it with indifference, has no sense of pastoral poetry:

Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt,
Et tibi magna satis; quamvis lapis omnia nudus,
Limosoque palus obducat pascua junco:
Non insueta gravem tentabunt pabula fœtam,
Nec mala vicini pecoris contagia ladent.
Fortunate senex, hic inter flumina lona,
Et fontes sacros, frigus captabis opacum.
Hinc tibi, quæ semper vicino ab limite sepes,
Hyblæis apibus florem depasta salicti,
Sæpe levi somnum suadebit inire susurro
Hinc alta sub rupe canet frondator ad auras;
Nec tamen interea raucæ, tua cura, palumbes,
Nec gemere aeria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

Happy old man! then still thy farms restored,
Enough for thee shall bless thy frugal board.
What though rough stones the naked soil o'erspread,
Or marshy bulrush rear its watery head,
No foreign food thy teeming ewes shall fear,
No touch contagious spread its influence here.
Happy old man! here 'mid th' accustom'd streams,
And sacred springs, you'll shun the scorching beams;
While from yon willow-fence, thy picture's bound,
The bees that suck the flowery stores around,
Shall sweetly mingle with the whispering boughs,
Their lulling murmurs and invite repose:
While from steep rocks the pruner's song is heard;
Nor the soft-cooing dove, thy favourite bird,
Meanwhile shall cease to breathe her melting strain,
Nor turtles from th' aerial elm to 'plain. WARTON.

It may be observed, that these two poems were produced by events that really happened; and may, therefore, be of use to prove, that we can always feel more than we can imagine and that the most artful fiction must give way to truth. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

DUBIUS.

No. 95.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1753.

Dulcique animos novitate tenebo. OVID.

And with sweet novelty your soul detain.

IT is often charged upon writers, that with all their pretensions to genius and discoveries, they do little more than copy one another, and that compositions obtruded upon the world with the pomp of novelty, contain only tedious repetitions of common sentiments, or at best exhibit a transposition of known images, and give a new appearance to truth only by some slight difference of dress and decoration.

The allegation of resemblance between authors is indisputably true; but the charge of plagiarism, which is raised upon it, is not to be allowed with equal readiness. A coincidence of sentiment may easily happen without any communication, since there are many occasions in which all reasonable men will nearly think alike. Writers of all ages have had the same sentiments, because they have in all ages had the same objects of speculation; the interests and passions, the virtues and vices of mankind, have been diversified in different times, only by unessential and casual varieties: and we must, therefore, expect in the works of all those who attempt to describe them, such a likeness as we find in the pictures of the same person drawn in different periods of his life.

It is necessary, therefore, that before an author be charged with plagiarism, one of the most reproachful, though perhaps not the most atrocious, of literary crimes, the subject on which he treats should be carefully considered. We do not wonder, that historians, relating the same facts, agree in their narration; or that authors, delivering the elements of science, advance the same theorems, and lay down the same definitions: yet it is not wholly without use to mankind, that books are multiplied, and that different authors lay out their labours on the same subject; for there will always be some reason why one should on particular occasions, or to particular persons, be preferable to another; some will be clear where others are obscure, some will please by their style and others by their method, some by their embellishments and others by their simplicity, some by closeness and others by diffusion.

The same indulgence is to be shown to the writers of morality: right and wrong are immutable; and those, therefore, who teach us to distinguish them, if they all teach us right, must agree with one another. The relations of social life, and the duties resulting from them, must be the same at all times and in all nations: some petty differences, may be, indeed, produced by forms of government or arbitrary customs; but the general doctrine can receive no alteration.

Yet it is not to be desired, that morality should be considered as interdicted to all future writers; men will always be tempted to deviate from their duty, and will, therefore, always want a monitor to recall them; and a new book often seizes the attention of the public without any other claim than that it is new. There is likewise in composition, as in other things, a perpetual vicissitude of fashion; and truth is recommended at one time to regard, by appearances which at another would expose it to neglect; the author, therefore, who has judgment to discern the taste of his contemporaries, and skill to gratify it, will have always an opportunity to deserve well of mankind, by conveying instruction to them in a grateful vehicle.

There are likewise many modes of composition, by which a moralist may deserve the name of an original writer: he may familiarize his system by dialogues after the manner of the ancients, or subtilize it into a series of syllogystic arguments: he may enforce his doctrine by seriousness and solemnity, or enliven it by sprightliness and gayety: he may deliver his sentiments in naked precepts, or illustrate them by historical examples: he may detain the studious by the artful concatenation of a continued discourse, or relieve the busy by short strictures, and unconnected essays.

To excel in any of these forms of writing will require a particular cultivation of the genius: whoever can attain to excellence, will be certain to engage a set of readers, whom no other method would have equally allured; and he that communicates truth with success, must be numbered among the first benefactors to mankind.

The same observation may be extended likewise to the passions: their influence is uniform, and their effects nearly the same in every human breast, a man loves and hates, desires and avoids, exactly like his neighbour; resentment and ambition, avarice and indolence, discover themselves by the same symptoms in minds distant a thousand years from one another.

Nothing, therefore, can be more unjust, than to charge an author with plagiarism, merely because he assigns to every cause its natural effect; and makes his personages act, as others in like circumstances have always done. There are

conceptions in which all men will agree, though each derives them from his own observation: whoever has been in love, will represent a lover impatient of every idea that interrupts his meditations on his mistress, retiring to shades and solitude, that he may muse without disturbance on his approaching happiness, or associating himself with some friend that flatters his passion, and talking away the hours of absence upon his darling subject. Whoever has been so unhappy as to have felt the miseries of long-continued hatred, will, without any assistance from ancient volumes, be able to relate how the passions are kept in perpetual agitation, by the recollection of injury, and meditations of revenge; how the blood boils at the name of the enemy, and life is worn away in contrivances of mischief.

Every other passion is alike simple and limited, if it be considered only with regard to the breast which it inhabits; the anatomy of the mind, as that of the body, must perpetually exhibit the same appearances; and though by the continued industry of successive inquirers, new movements will be from time to time discovered, they can affect only the minuter parts, and are commonly of more curiosity than importance.

It will now be natural to inquire, by what arts are the writers of the present and future ages to attract the notice and favour of mankind. They are to observe the alterations which time is always making in the modes of life, that they may gratify every generation with a picture of themselves. Thus love is uniform, but courtship is perpetually varying: the different arts of gallantry, which beauty has inspired, would of themselves be sufficient to fill a volume; sometimes balls and serenades; sometimes tournaments and adventures, have been employed to melt the hearts of ladies, who in another century have been sensible of scarce any other merit than that of riches, and listened only to jointures and pin-money. Thus the ambitious man has at all times been eager of wealth and power; but these hopes have been gratified in some countries by supplicating the people, and in others, by flattering the prince: honour in some states has been only the reward of military achievements, in others, it has been gained by noisy turbulence, and popular clamours. Avarice has worn a different form, as she actuated the usurer of Rome, and the stock-jobber of England; and idleness itself, how little soever inclined to the trouble of invention, has been forced from time to time to change its amusements, and contrive different methods of wearing out the day.

Here then is the fund, from which those who study mankind may fill their compositions with an inexhaustible variety of images and allusions; and he must be confessed to look with little attention upon scenes thus perpetually changing, who cannot catch some of the figures before they are made vulgar by reiterated descriptions.

It has been discovered by Sir Isaac Newton, that the distinct and primogenial colours are only seven; but every eye can witness, that from various mixtures, in various proportions, infinite diversification of tints may be produced. In like manner, the passions of the mind, which put the world in motion, and produce all the bustle and eagerness of the busy crowds that swarm upon the earth; the passions, from whence arise all the pleasures and pains that we see and hear of, if we analyze the mind of man, are very few: but those few agitated and combined, as external causes shall happen to operate, and modified by prevailing opinions and accidental caprices, make such frequent alterations on the surface of life, that the show, while we are busied in delineating it, vanishes from the view, and a new set of objects succeed, doomed to the same shortness of duration with the former: thus curiosity may always find employment, and the busy part of mankind will furnish the contemplative with the materials of speculation, to the end of time.

The complaint, therefore, that all topics are pre-occupied, is nothing more than the murmur of ignorance or idleness, by which some discou rage others, and some themselves; the mutability of mankind will always furnish writers with new images, and the luxuriance of fancy may always embellish them with new decorations.

No. 99.] Tuesday, Oct. 16, 1753.

—Magnis tamen excidit ausis. Ovid.

But in the glorious enterprise he died. Addison

It has always been the practice of mankind, to judge of actions by the event. The same attempts, conducted in the same manner, but terminated by different success, produce different judgments: they who attain their wishes, never want celebrators of their wisdom and their virtue; and they that miscarry, are quickly discovered to have been defective not only in mental but in moral qualities. The world will never be long without some good reason to hate the unhappy: their real faults are immediately detected; and if those are not sufficient to sink them into infamy, an additional weight of calumny will be superadded: he that fails in his endeavours after wealth or power, will not long retain either honesty or courage.

This species of injustice has so long prevailed in universal practice, that it seems likewise to have infected speculation: so few minds are able to separate the ideas of greatness and prosperity, that even Sir William Temple has determined, "that he who can deserve the name of a hero, must not only be virtuous but fortunate."

By this unreasonable distribution of praise and blame, none have suffered oftener than projectors, whose rapidity of imagination, and vastness of design, raise such envy in their fellow mortals, that every eye watches for their fall, and every heart exults at their distresses: yet even a projector may gain favour by success; and the tongue that was prepared to hiss, then endeavours to excel others in loudness of applause.

When Coriolanus, in Shakspeare, deserted to Anfidius, the Volscian servants at first insulted him, even while he stood under the protection of the household gods: but when they saw that the project took effect, and the stranger was seated at the head of the table, one of them very judiciously observes, "that he always thought there was more in him than he could think."

Machiavel has justly animadverted on the different notice taken by all succeeding times, of the two great projectors, Catiline and Cæsar. Both formed the same project, and intended to raise themselves to power, by subverting the commonwealth: they pursued their design, per-

haps, with equal abilities and with equal virtue; But Catiline perished in the field, and Cæsar returned from Pharsalia with unlimited authority: and from that time, every monarch of the earth has thought himself honoured by a comparison with Cæsar; and Catiline has been never mentioned, but that his name might be applied to traitors and incendiaries.

In an age more remote, Xerxes projected the conquest of Greece, and brought down the power of Asia against it: but after the world had been filled with expectation and terror, his army was beaten, his fleet was destroyed, and Xerxes has never been mentioned without contempt.

A few years afterwards Greece likewise had her turn of giving birth to a projector; who, invading Asia with a small army, went forward in search of adventures, and by his escape from one danger, gained only more rashness to rush into another; he stormed city after city, overran kingdom after kingdom, fought battles only for barren victory, and invaded nations only that he might make his way through them to new invasions; but having been fortunate in the execution of his projects, he died with the name of Alexander the Great.

These are, indeed, events of ancient times; but human nature is always the same, and every age will afford us instances of public censures influenced by events. The great business of the middle centuries, was the holy war; which undoubtedly was a noble project, and was for a long time prosecuted with a spirit equal to that with which it had been contrived; but the ardour of the European heroes only hurried them to destruction; for a long time they could not gain the territories for which they fought, and, when at last gained, they could not keep them: their expeditions, therefore, have been the scoff of idleness and ignorance, their understanding and their virtue have been equally vilified, their conduct has been ridiculed, and their cause has been defamed.

When Columbus had engaged king Ferdinand in the discovery of the other hemisphere, the sailors with whom he embarked in the expedition had so little confidence in their commander, that after having been long at sea looking for coasts which they expected never to find, they raised a general mutiny, and demanded to return. He found means to soothe them into a permission to continue the same course three days longer, and on the evening of the third day descried land. Had the impatience of his crew denied him a few hours of the time requested, what had been his fate but to have come back with the infamy of a vain projector, who had betrayed the king's credulity to useless expenses, and risked his life in seeking countries that had no existence? how would those that had rejected his proposals, have triumphed in their acuteness! and when would his name have been mentioned, but with the makers of potable gold and malleable glass?

The last royal projectors with whom the world has been troubled, were Charles of Sweden, and the Czar of Muscovy. Charles, if any judgment may be formed of his designs by his measures and his inquiries, had purposed first to dethrone the Czar, then to lead his army through pathless deserts into China, thence to make his way by the sword through the whole circuit of Asia, and by the conquest of Turkey to unite Sweden with his new dominions: but this mighty project was crushed at Pultowa; and Charles has since been considered as a madman by those powers, who sent their ambassadors to solicit his friendship, and their generals "to learn under him the art of war."

The Czar found employment sufficient in his own dominions, and amused himself in digging canals, and building cities; murdering his subjects with insufferable fatigues, and transplanting nations from one corner of his dominions to another, without regretting the thousands that perished on the way: but he attained his end, he made his people formidable, and is numbered by fame among the demi-gods.

I am far from intending to vindicate the sanguinary projects of heroes and conquerors, and would wish rather to diminish the reputation of their success, than the infamy of their miscarriages: for I cannot conceive, why he that has burned cities, wasted nations, and filled the world with horror and desolation, should be more kindly regarded by mankind, than he who died in the rudiments of wickedness; why he that accomplished wickedness should be glorious, and he that only endeavoured it should be criminal. I would wish Cæsar and Catiline, Xerxes and Alexander, Charles and Peter, huddled together in obscurity or detestation.

But there is another species of projectors, to whom I would willingly conciliate mankind; whose ends are generally laudable, and whose labours are innocent; who are searching out new powers of nature, or contriving new works of art; but who are yet persecuted with incessant obloquy, and whom the universal contempt with which they are treated, often debars from that success which their industry would obtain, if it were permitted to act without opposition.

They who find themselves inclined to censure new undertakings, only because they are new, should consider, that the folly of projection is very seldom the folly of a fool; it is commonly the ebullition of a capacious mind, crowded with variety of knowledge, and heated with intenseness of thought; it proceeds often from the consciousness of uncommon powers, from the confidence of those, who, having already done much, are easily persuaded that they can do more. When Rowley had completed the orrery, he attempted the perpetual motion; when Boyle had exhausted the secrets of vulgar chymistry, he turned his thoughts to the work of transmutation.

A projector generally unites those qualities which have the fairest claim to veneration, extent of knowledge, and greatness of design; it was said of Catiline, "*immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat.*" Projectors of all kinds agree in their intellects, though they differ in their morals; they all fail by attempting things beyond their power, by despising vulgar attainments, and aspiring to performances to which perhaps nature has not proportioned the force of man; when they fail, therefore, they fail not by idleness or timidity, but by rash adventure and fruitless diligence.

That the attempts of such men will often miscarry, we may reasonably expect; yet from such men, and such only, are we to hope for the cultivation of those parts of nature which lie yet

waste, and the invention of those arts which are yet wanting to the felicity of life. If they are, therefore, universally discouraged, art and discovery can make no advances. Whatever is attempted without previous certainty of success, may be considered as a project, and amongst narrow minds may, therefore, expose its author to censure and contempt; and if the liberty of laughing be once indulged, every man will laugh at what he does not understand, every project will be considered as madness, and every great or new design will be censured as a project. Men, unaccustomed to reason and researches, think every enterprise impracticable, which is extended beyond common effects, or comprises many intermediate operations. Many that presume to laugh at projectors, would consider a flight through the air in a winged chariot, and the movement of a mighty engine by the steam of water, as equally the dreams of mechanic lunacy; and would hear, with equal negligence, of the union of the Thames and Severn by a canal, and the scheme of Albuquerque, the viceroy of the Indies, who in the rage of hostility had contrived to make Egypt a barren desert, by turning the Nile into the Red Sea.

Those who have attempted much, have seldom failed to perform more than those who never deviate from the common roads of action: many valuable preparations of chymistry are supposed to have risen from unsuccessful inquiries after the grand elixir; it is, therefore, just to encourage those who endeavour to enlarge the power of art, since they often succeed beyond expectation; and when they fail, may sometimes benefit the world even by their miscarriages.

No. 102.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1753.

—— Quid tam dextro pede concipis, ut te
Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti? JUV.

What in the conduct of our life appears
So well design'd, so luckily begun,
But when we have our wish, we wish undone?
DRYDEN.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I HAVE been for many years a trader in London. My beginning was narrow, and my stock small. I was, therefore, a long time brow-beaten and despised by those, who, having more money, thought they had more merit than myself. I did not, however, suffer my resentment to instigate me to any mean arts of supplantation, nor my eagerness of riches to betray me to any indirect methods of gain; I pursued my business with incessant assiduity, supported by the hope of being one day richer than those who contemned me; and had, upon every annual review of my books, the satisfaction of finding my fortune increased beyond my expectation.

In a few years my industry and probity were fully recompensed; my wealth was really great, and my reputation for wealth still greater. I had large warehouses crowded with goods, and considerable sums in the public funds; I was caressed upon the Exchange by the most eminent merchants; became the oracle of the common council; was solicited to engage in all commercial undertakings; was flattered with the hopes of becoming in a short time one of the directors of a wealthy company, and, to complete my mercantile honours, enjoyed the expensive happiness of fining for sheriff.

Riches, you know, easily produce riches: when I had arrived to this degree of wealth, I had no longer any obstruction or opposition to fear; new acquisitions were hourly brought within my reach, and I continued for some years longer to heap thousands upon thousands.

At last I resolved to complete the circle of a citizen's prosperity by the purchase of an estate in the country, and to close my life in retirement. From the hour that this design entered my imagination, I found the fatigues of my employment every day more oppressive, and persuaded myself that I was no longer equal to perpetual attention, and that my health would soon be destroyed by the torment and distraction of extensive business. I could image to myself no happiness, but in vacant jollity, and uninterrupted leisure; nor entertain my friends with any other topic, than the vexation and uncertainty of trade, and the happiness of rural privacy.

But notwithstanding these declarations, I could not at once reconcile myself to the thoughts of ceasing to get money; and though I was every day inquiring for a purchase, I found some reason for rejecting all that were offered me; and, indeed, had accumulated so many beauties and conveniences in my idea of the spot where I was finally to be happy, that, perhaps, the world might have been travelled over without discovery of a place which could not have been defective in some particular.

Thus I went on, still talking of retirement, and still refusing to retire; my friends began to laugh at my delays, and I grew ashamed to trifle longer with my own inclinations; an estate was at length purchased, I transferred my stock to a prudent young man who had married my daughter, went down into the country, and commenced lord of a spacious manor.

Here for some time, I found happiness equal to my expectation. I reformed the old house according to the advice of the best architects, I threw down the walls of the garden, and enclosed it with palisades, planted long avenues of trees, filled a greenhouse with exotic plants, dug a new canal, and threw the earth into the old moat.

The fame of these expensive improvements brought in all the country to see the show. I entertained my visitors with great liberality, led them round my gardens, showed them my apartments, laid before them plans for new decorations, and was gratified by the wonder of some and the envy of others.

I was envied: but how little can one man judge of the condition of another! The time was now coming, in which affluence and splendour could no longer make me pleased with myself. I had built till the imagination of the architect was exhausted; I had added one convenience to another, till I knew not what more to wish or to design; I had laid out my gardens, planted my park, and completed my waterworks; and what now remained to be done? what, but to look up to turrets, of which, when they were once raised I had no further use, to range over apartments where time was tarnishing the furniture, to

stand by the cascade of which I scarcely now perceived the sound, and to watch the growth of woods that must give their shade to a distant generation.

In this gloomy inactivity, is every day begun and ended: the happiness that I have been so long procuring is now at an end, because it has been procured; I wander from room to room, till I am weary of myself; I ride out to a neighbouring hill in the centre of my estate, from whence all my lands lie in prospect around me; I see nothing that I have not seen before, and return home disappointed, though I knew that I had nothing to expect.

In my happy days of business I had been accustomed to rise early in the morning: and remember the time when I grieved that the night came so soon upon me, and obliged me, for a few hours, to shut out affluence and prosperity. I now seldom see the rising sun, but to "tell him," with the fallen angel, "how I hate his beams." I awake from sleep as to languor or imprisonment, and have no employment for the first hour but to consider by what art I shall rid myself of the second. I protract the breakfast as long as I can, because when it is ended I have no call for my attention, till I can with some degree of decency grow impatient for my dinner. If I could dine all my life I should be happy; I eat not because I am hungry, but because I am idle: but, alas! the time quickly comes when I can eat no longer; and so ill does my constitution second my inclination, that I cannot bear strong liquors; seven hours must then be endured, before I shall sup; but supper comes at last, the more welcome as it is in a short time succeeded by sleep.

Such, Mr. Adventurer, is the happiness, the hope of which seduced me from the duties of a mercantile life. I shall be told by those who read my narrative, that there are many means of innocent amusement, and many schemes of useful employment, which I do not appear ever to have known; and that nature and art have provided pleasures by which, without the drudgery of settled business, the active may be engaged, the solitary soothed, and the social entertained.

These arts, Sir, I have tried. When first I took possession of my estate, in conformity to the taste of my neighbours, I bought guns and nets, filled my kennel with dogs, and my stable with horses: but a little experience showed me, that these instruments of rural felicity would afford me few gratifications. I never shot but to miss the mark, and, to confess the truth, was afraid of the fire of my own gun. I could discover no music in the cry of the dogs, nor could divest myself of pity for the animal whose peaceful and inoffensive life was sacrificed to our sport. I was not, indeed, always at leisure to reflect upon her danger; for my horse, who had been bred to the chase, did not always regard my choice either of speed or way, but leaped hedges and ditches at his own discretion, and hurried me along with the dogs, to the great diversion of my brother sportsmen. His eagerness of pursuit once incited him to swim a river; and I had leisure to resolve in the water, that I would never hazard my life again for the destruction of a hare.

I ordered books to be procured, and by the direction of the vicar had within a few weeks, a closet elegantly furnished. You will, perhaps, be surprised when I shall tell you, that when once I had ranged them according to their sizes, and piled them up in regular gradations, I had received all the pleasure which they could give me. I am not able to excite in myself any curiosity after events which have been long passed, and in which I can therefore have no interest; I am utterly unconcerned to know whether Tully or Demosthenes excelled in oratory, whether Hannibal lost Italy by his own negligence or the corruption of his countrymen. I have no skill in controversial learning, nor can conceive why so many volumes should have been written upon questions, which I have lived so long and so happily without understanding. I once resolved to go through the volumes relating to the office of justice of the peace, but found them so crabbed and intricate, that in less than a month I desisted in despair, and resolved to supply my deficiencies by paying a competent salary to a skilful clerk.

I am naturally inclined to hospitality, and for some time kept up a constant intercourse of visits with the neighbouring gentlemen; but though they are easily brought about me by better wine than they can find at any other house, I am not much relieved by their conversation; they have no skill in commerce or the stocks, and I have no knowledge of the history of families or the factions of the country; so that when the first civilities are over, they usually talk to one another, and I am left alone in the midst of the company. Though I cannot drink myself, I am obliged to encourage the circulation of the glass; their mirth grows more turbulent and obstreperous; and before their merriment is at an end, I am sick with disgust, and perhaps reproached with my sobriety, or by some sly insinuations insulted as a cit.

Such, Mr. Adventurer, is the life to which I am condemned by a foolish endeavour to be happy by imitation; such is the happiness to which I pleased myself with approaching, and which I considered as the chief end of my cares and my labours. I toiled year after year with chcerfulness, in expectation of the happy hour in which I might be idle: the privilege of happiness is attained, but has not brought with it the blessing of tranquillity. I am yours, &c.

MERCATOR

No. 107.] TUESDAY, NOV. 13, 1753.

Subjudice lis est.— HOR.

And of their vain disputings find no end. FRANCIS.

IT has been sometimes asked by those who find the appearance of wisdom more easily attained by questions than solutions, how it comes to pass, that the world is divided by such difference of opinion; and why men equally reasonable, and equally lovers of truth, do not always think in the same manner?

With regard to simple propositions, where the terms are understood, and the whole subject is comprehended at once, there is such a uniformity of sentiment among all human beings, that, for many ages, a very numerous set of notions were supposed to be innate, or necessarily coex

istent with the faculty of reason; it being imagined, that universal agreement could proceed only from the invariable dictates of the universal parent.

In questions diffuse and compounded, this similarity of determination is no longer to be expected. At our first sally into the intellectual world, we all march together along one straight and open road; but as we proceed further, and wider prospects open to our view, every eye fixes upon a different scene; we divide into various paths, and, as we move forward, are still at a greater distance from each other. As a question becomes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, disagreement of opinion will always be multiplied; not because we are irrational, but because we are finite beings, furnished with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention, one discovering consequences which escape another, none taking in the whole concatenation of causes and effects, and most comprehending but a very small part, each comparing what he observes with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpose.

Where, then, is the wonder, that they who see only a small part, should judge erroneously of the whole? or that they, who see different and dissimilar parts, should judge differently from each other?

Whatever has various respects, must have various appearances of good and evil, beauty or deformity; thus the gardener tears up as a weed, the plant which the physician gathers as a medicine; and "a general," says Sir Kenelm Digby, "will look with pleasure over a plain, as a fit place on which the fate of empires might be decided in battle, which the farmer will despise as bleak and barren, neither fruitful of pasturage, nor fit for tillage."

Two men examining the same question, proceed commonly like the physician and gardener in selecting herbs, or the farmer and hero looking on the plain; they bring minds impressed with different notions, and direct their inquiries to different ends; they form, therefore, contrary conclusions, and each wonders at the other's absurdity.

We have less reason to be surprised or offended when we find others differ from us in opinion, because we very often differ from ourselves. How often we alter our minds, we do not always remark; because the change is sometimes made imperceptibly and gradually, and the last conviction effaces all memory of the former, yet every man accustomed from time to time to take a survey of his own notions, will, by a slight retrospection, be able to discover, that his mind has suffered many revolutions; that the same things have in the several parts of his life been condemned and approved, pursued and shunned: and that on many occasions, even when his practice has been steady, his mind has been wavering, and he has persisted in a scheme of action, rather because he feared the censure of inconstancy, than because he was always pleased with his own choice.

Of the different faces shown by the same objects, as they are viewed on opposite sides, and of the different inclinations which they must constantly raise in him that contemplates them, a more striking example cannot easily be found than two Greek epigrammatists will afford us in their accounts of human life, which I shall lay before the reader in English prose.

Posidippus, a comic poet, utters this complaint: "Through which of the paths of life is it eligible to pass? In public assemblies are debates and troublesome affairs: domestic privacies are haunted with anxieties; in the country is labour; on the sea is terror: in a foreign land, he that has money must live in fear, he that wants it must pine in distress: are you married? you are troubled with suspicions; are you single? you languish in solitude; children occasion toil, and a childless life is a state of destitution: the time of youth is a time of folly, and gray hairs are loaded with infirmity. This choice only, therefore, can be made, either never to receive being, or immediately to lose it."

Such and so gloomy is the prospect which Posidippus has laid before us. But we are not to acquiesce too hastily in his determination against the value of existence: for Metrodorus, a philosopher of Athens, has shown, that life has pleasures as well as pains; and having exhibited the present state of man in brighter colours, draws with equal appearance of reason, a contrary conclusion.

"You may pass well through any of the paths of life. In public assemblies are honours and transactions of wisdom: in domestic privacy is stillness and quiet: in the country are the beauties of nature: on the sea is the hope of gain: in a foreign land, he that is rich is honoured, he that is poor may keep his poverty secret: are you married? you have a cheerful house; are you single: you are unincumbered; children are objects of affection, to be without children is to be without care: the time of youth is the time of vigour, and gray hairs are made venerable by piety. It will, therefore, never be a wise man's choice, either not to obtain existence, or to lose it; for every state of life has its felicity."

In these epigrams are included most of the questions which have engaged the speculations of the inquirers after happiness; and though they will not much assist our determinations, they may, perhaps, equally promote our quiet, by showing that no absolute determination ever can be formed.

Whether a public station, or private life, be desirable, has always been debated. We see here both the allurements and discouragements of civil employments; on one side there is trouble, on the other honour; the management of affairs is vexatious and difficult, but it is the only duty in which wisdom can be conspicuously displayed: it must then still be left to every man to choose either ease or glory; nor can any general precept be given, since no man can be happy by the prescription of another.

Thus, what is said of children by Posidippus, "that they are occasions of fatigue," and by Metrodorus, "that they are objects of affection," is equally certain; but whether they will give most pain or pleasure, must depend on their future conduct and dispositions, on many causes over which the parent can have little influence: there is, therefore, room for all the caprices of imagination, and desire must be proportioned to the hope or fear that shall happen to predominate.

Such is the uncertainty in which we are always likely to remain with regard to questions

wherein we have most interest, and which every day affords us fresh opportunity to examine: we may examine, indeed, but we never can decide, because our faculties are unequal to the subject; we see a little, and form an opinion; we see more, and change it.

This inconstancy and unsteadiness, to which we must so often find ourselves liable, ought certainly to teach us moderation and forbearance towards those who cannot accommodate themselves to our sentiments: if they are deceived, we have no right to attribute their mistake to obstinacy or negligence, because we likewise have been mistaken; we may, perhaps, again, change our own opinion: and what excuse shall we be able to find for aversion and malignity conceived against him, whom we shall then find to have committed no fault, and who offended us only by refusing to follow us into error?

It may likewise contribute to soften that resentment which pride naturally raises against opposition, if we consider, that he who differs from us, does not always contradict us; he has one view of an object, and we have another; each describes what he sees with equal fidelity, and each regulates his steps by his own eyes: one man, with Posidippus, looks on celibacy as a state of gloomy solitude, without a partner in joy, or a comforter in sorrow; the other considers it, with Metrodorus, as a state free from incumbrances, in which a man is at liberty to choose his own gratifications, to remove from place to place in quest of pleasure, and to think of nothing but merriment and diversion: full of these notions one hastens to choose a wife, and the other laughs at his rashness, or pities his ignorance; yet it is possible that each is right, but that each is right only for himself.

Life is not the object of science: we see a little, very little; and what is beyond we only can conjecture. If we inquire of those who have gone before us, we receive small satisfaction; some have travelled life without observation, and some willingly mislead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repose with comfort, is that which presents to us the care of Providence, whose eye takes in the whole of things, and under whose direction all involuntary errors will terminate in happiness.

No. 108.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1753.

Nobis, cum simul occidit orevis lux,
Nox est perpetuo una dormienda. CATULLUS.

When once the short-lived mortal dies,
A night eternal seals his eyes. ADDISON.

IT may have been observed by every reader, that there are certain topics which never are exhausted. Of some images and sentiments the mind of man may be said to be enamoured; it meets them, however often they occur, with the same ardour which a lover feels at the sight of his mistress, and parts from them with the same regret when they can no longer be enjoyed.

Of this kind are many descriptions which the poets have transcribed from each other and their successors will probably copy to the end of time; which will continue to engage, or as the French term it, to flatter the imagination, as long as human nature shall remain the same.

When a poet mentions the spring, we know that the zephyrs are about to whisper, that the groves are to recover their verdure, the linnets to warble forth their notes of love, and the flock and herds to frisk over vales painted with flowers: yet, who is there so insensible of the beauties of nature, so little delighted with the renovation of the world, as not to feel his heart bound at the mention of the spring?

When night overshadows a romantic scene all is stillness, silence, and quiet; the poets of the grove cease their melody, the moon towers over the world in gentle majesty, men forget their labours, and their cares, and every passion and pursuit is for a while suspended. All this we know already, yet we hear it repeated without weariness; because such is generally the life of man, that he is pleased to think on the time when he shall pause from a sense of his condition.

When a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we shall find what we have already seen, a limpid brook murmuring over pebbles, a bank diversified with flowers, a green arch that excludes the sun, and a natural grot shaded with myrtles; yet who can forbear to enter the pleasing gloom, to enjoy coolness and privacy, and gratify himself once more by scenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted?

Many moral sentiments likewise are so adapted to our state, that they find approbation whenever they solicit it, and are seldom read without exciting a gentle emotion in the mind: such is the comparison of the life of man with the duration of a flower, a thought which perhaps every nation has heard warbled in its own language, from the inspired poets of the Hebrews to our own times; yet this comparison must always please, because every heart feels its justness, and every hour confirms it by example.

Such, likewise, is the precept that directs us to use the present hour, and refer nothing to a distant time, which we are uncertain whether we shall reach: this every moralist may venture to inculcate, because it will always be approved, and because it is always forgotten.

This rule is, indeed, every day enforced, by arguments more powerful than the dissertations of moralists: we see men pleasing themselves with future happiness, fixing a certain hour for the completion of their wishes, and perishing some at a greater and some at a less distance from the happy time; all complaining of their disappointments, and lamenting that they had suffered the years which Heaven allowed them, to pass without improvement, and deferred the principal purpose of their lives to the time when life itself was to forsake them.

It is not only uncertain, whether through all the casualties and dangers which beset the life of man, we shall be able to reach the time appointed for happiness or wisdom; but it is likely, that whatever now hinders us from doing that which our reason and conscience declare necessary to be done, will equally obstruct us in times to come. It is easy for the imagination, operating on things not yet existing, to please itself with scenes of unmingled felicity, or plan out courses of uniform virtue; but good and evil are

in real life inseparably united; habits grow stronger by indulgence; and reason loses her dignity, in proportion as she has oftener yielded to temptation: "he that cannot live well to-day," says Martial, "will be less qualified to live well to-morrow."

Of the uncertainty of every human good, every human being seems to be convinced; yet this uncertainty is voluntarily increased by unnecessary delay, whether we respect external causes, or consider the nature of our own minds. He that now feels a desire to do right, and wishes to regulate his life according to his reason, is not sure that, at any future time assignable, he shall be able to rekindle the same ardour; he that has now an opportunity offered him of breaking loose from vice and folly, cannot know, but that he shall hereafter be more entangled, and struggle for freedom without obtaining it.

We are so unwilling to believe any thing to our own disadvantage, that we will always imagine the perspicacity of our judgment and the strength of our resolution more likely to increase than to grow less by time; and, therefore, conclude, that the will to pursue laudable purposes, will be always seconded by the power.

But, however we may be deceived in calculating the strength of our faculties, we cannot doubt the uncertainty of that life in which they must be employed: we see every day the unexpected death of our friends and our enemies, we see new graves hourly opened for men older and younger than ourselves, for the cautious and the careless, the dissolute and the temperate, for men who, like us, were providing to enjoy or improve hours now irreversibly cut off: we see all this, and yet, instead of living, let year glide after year in preparations to live.

Men are so frequently cut off in the midst of their projections, that sudden death causes little emotion in them that behold it, unless it be impressed upon the attention by uncommon circumstances. I, like every other man, have outlived multitudes, have seen ambition sink in its triumphs, and beauty perish in its bloom; but have been seldom so much affected as by the fate of Euryalus, whom I lately lost as I began to love him.

Euryalus had for some time flourished in a lucrative profession; but having suffered his imagination to be fired by an unextinguishable curiosity, he grew weary of the same dull round of life, resolved to harass himself no longer with the drudgery of getting money, but to quit his business and his profit, and enjoy for a few years the pleasures of travel. His friends heard him proclaim his resolution without suspecting that he intended to pursue it: but he was constant to his purpose, and with great expedition closed his accounts and sold his moveables, passed a few days in bidding farewell to his companions, and with all the eagerness of romantic chivalry, crossed the sea in search of happiness. Whatever place was renowned in ancient or modern history, whatever region art or nature had distinguished, he determined to visit: full of design and hope, he landed on the continent; his friends expected accounts from him of the new scenes that opened in his progress, but were informed in a few days, that Euryalus was dead.

Such was the end of Euryalus. He is entered that state whence none ever shall return; and can now only benefit his friends, by remaining to their memories a permanent and efficacious instance of the blindness of desire, and the uncertainty of all terrestrial good. But perhaps every man has, like me, lost an Euryalus, has known a friend die with happiness in his grasp; and yet every man continues to think himself secure of life, and defers to some future time of leisure what he knows it will be fatal to have finally omitted.

It is, indeed, with this as with other frailties inherent in our nature; the desire of deferring to another time, what cannot be done without endurance of some pain, or forbearance of some pleasure, will, perhaps, never be totally overcome or suppressed; there will always be something that we shall wish to have finished, and be nevertheless unwilling to begin: but against this unwillingness it is our duty to struggle, and every conquest over our passions will make way for an easier conquest: custom is equally forcible to bad and good; nature will always be at variance with reason, but will rebel more feebly as she is oftener subdued.

The common neglect of the present hour is more shameful and criminal, as no man is betrayed to it by error, but admits it by negligence. Of the instability of life, the weakest understanding never thinks wrong, though the strongest often omits to think justly: reason and experience are always ready to inform us of our real state; but we refuse to listen to their suggestions, because we feel our hearts unwilling to obey them: but, surely, nothing is more unworthy of a reasonable being, than to shut his eyes, when he sees the road which he is commanded to travel, that he may deviate with fewer reproaches from himself: nor could any motive to tenderness, except the consciousness that we have all been guilty of the same fault, dispose us to pity those who thus consign themselves to voluntary ruin.

No. 111.] TUESDAY, NOV. 27, 1753.

——— Quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco. OVID.

The deeds of long descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours. DRYDEN

THE evils inseparably annexed to the present condition of man, are so numerous and afflictive, that it has been, from age to age, the task of some to bewail, and of others to solace them, and he, therefore, will be in danger of seeming a common enemy, who shall attempt to depreciate the few pleasures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

Yet I will confess, that I have sometimes employed my thoughts in examining the pretensions that are made to happiness, by the splendid and envied condition of life; and have not thought the hour unprofitably spent, when I have detected the imposture of counterfeit advantages, and found disquiet lurking under false appearances of gayety and greatness.

It is asserted by a tragic poet, that "*est miser nemo nisi comparatus*," "no man is miserable, but as he is compared with others happier than

himself:" this position is not strictly and philosophically true. He might have said with rigorous propriety, that no man is happy but as he is compared with the miserable; for such is the state of this world, that we find in it absolute misery, but happiness only comparative; we may incur as much pain as we can possibly endure, though we can never obtain as much happiness as we might possibly enjoy.

Yet it is certain likewise, that many of our miseries are merely comparative: we are often made unhappy, not by the presence of any real evil, but by the absence of some fictitious good; of something which is not required by any real want of nature which has not in itself any power of gratification, and which neither reason nor fancy would have prompted us to wish, did we not see it in the possession of others.

For a mind diseased with vain longings after unattainable advantages, no medicine can be prescribed, but an impartial inquiry into the real worth of that which is so ardently desired. It is well known, how much the mind, as well as the eye, is deceived by distance; and, perhaps, it will be found, that of many imagined blessings it may be doubted, whether he that wants or possesses them has more reason to be satisfied with his lot.

The dignity of high birth and long extraction, no man, to whom nature has denied it, can confer upon himself; and, therefore, it deserves to be considered, whether the want of that which can never be gained, may not easily be endured. It is true, that if we consider the triumph and delight with which most of those recount their ancestors, who have ancestors to recount, and the artifices by which some who have risen to unexpected fortune endeavour to insert themselves into an honourable stem, we shall be inclined to fancy that wisdom or virtue may be had by inheritance, or that all the excellences of a line of progenitors are accumulated on their descendant. Reason, indeed, will soon inform us, that our estimation of birth is arbitrary, and capricious, and that dead ancestors can have no influence but upon imagination: let it then be examined, whether one dream may not operate in the place of another; whether he that owes nothing to forefathers, may not receive equal pleasure from the consciousness of owing all to himself; whether he may not, with a little meditation, find it more honourable to found than to continue a family, and to gain dignity than transmit it; whether, if he receives no dignity from the virtues of his family, he does not likewise escape the danger of being disgraced by their crimes; and whether he that brings a new name into the world, has not the convenience of playing the game of life without a stake, and opportunity of winning much though he has nothing to lose.

There is another opinion concerning happiness, which approaches much more nearly to universality, but which may, perhaps, with equal reason be disputed. The pretensions to ancestral honours many of the sons of earth easily see to be ill-grounded; but all agree to celebrate the advantage of hereditary riches, and to consider those as the minions of fortune, who are wealthy from their cradles, whose estate is "*res non parta labore, sed relicta;*" "the acquisition of another, not of themselves;" and whom a father's industry has dispensed from a laborious attention to arts or commerce, and left at liberty to dispose of life as fancy shall direct them.

If every man were wise and virtuous, capable to discern the best use of time, and resolute to practise it, it might be granted, I think, without hesitation, that total liberty would be a blessing; and that it would be desirable to be left at large to the exercise of religious and social duties, without the interruption of importunate avocations.

But, since felicity is relative, and that which is the means of happiness to one man may be to another the cause of misery, we are to consider, what state is best adapted to human nature in its present degeneracy and frailty. And, surely, to far the greater number it is highly expedient, that they should by some settled scheme of duties be rescued from the tyranny of caprice, that they should be driven on by necessity through the paths of life with their attention confined to a stated task, that they may be less at leisure to deviate into mischief at the call of folly.

When we observe the lives of those whom an ample inheritance has let loose to their own direction, what do we discover that can excite our envy? Their time seems not to pass with much applause from others, or satisfaction to themselves: many squander their exuberance of fortune in luxury and debauchery, and have no other use of money than to inflame their passions, and riot in a wide range of licentiousness; others, less criminal indeed, but surely not much to be praised, lie down to sleep, and rise up to trifle, are employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themselves of the day, chase pleasure through all the places of public resort, fly from London to Bath, and from Bath to London, without any other reason for changing place, but that they go in quest of company as idle and as vagrant as themselves, always endeavouring to raise some new desire, that they may have something to pursue, to kindle some hope which they know will be disappointed, changing one amusement for another which a few months will make equally insipid, or sinking into languor and disease for want of something to actuate their bodies or exhilarate their minds.

Whoever has frequented those places, where idlers assemble to escape from solitude, knows that this is generally the state of the wealthy; and from this state it is no great hardship to be debarred. No man can be happy in total idleness: he that should be condemned to lie torpid and motionless, "would fly for recreation," says South, "to the mines and the galleys;" and it is well, when nature or fortune finds employment for those, who would not have known how to procure it for themselves.

He, whose mind is engaged by the acquisition or improvement of a fortune, not only escapes the insipidity of indifference, and the tediousness of inactivity, but gains enjoyments wholly unknown to those, who live lazily on the toil of others; for life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes, and seeing them gratified. He that labours in any great or laudable undertaking, has his fatigues first supported by hope, and afterwards rewarded by joy; he is always moving to a certain end, and when he has attained it, an end more distant invites him to a new pursuit.

It does not, indeed, always happen, that diligence is fortunate; the wisest schemes are broken by unexpected accidents; the most constant perseverance sometimes toils through life without a recompense; but labour, though unsuccessful, is more eligible than idleness; he that prosecutes a lawful purpose by lawful means, acts always with the approbation of his own reason; he is animated through the course of his endeavours by an expectation which, though not certain, he knows to be just; and is at last comforted in his disappointment, by the consciousness that he has not failed by his own fault.

That kind of life is most happy which affords us most opportunities of gaining our own esteem; and what can any man infer in his own favour from a condition to which, however prosperous, he contributed nothing, and which the vilest and weakest of the species would have obtained by the same right, had he happened to be the son of the same father?

To strive with difficulties, and to conquer them, is the highest human felicity; the next is, to strive, and deserve to conquer: but he whose life has passed without a contest, and who can boast neither success nor merit, can survey himself only as a useless filler of existence; and if he is content with his own character, must owe his satisfaction to insensibility.

Thus it appears that the satirist advised rightly, when he directed us to resign ourselves to the hands of Heaven, and to leave to superior powers the determination of our lot:

Permittes ipsis expendere Numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rabusque sit utile nostris:
Carior est illis homo quam sibi.

Intrust thy fortune to the Powers above:
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.
In goodness as in greatness they excel;
Ah! that we loved ourselves but half so well.
DRYDEN.

What state of life admits most happiness, is uncertain; but that uncertainty ought to repress the petulance of comparison, and silence the murmurs of discontent.

No. 115.] TUESDAY, DEC. 11, 1753.

Scribimus indocti doctique. HOR.

All dare to write, who can or cannot read.

THEY who have attentively considered the history of mankind, know that every age has its peculiar character. At one time, no desire is felt but for military honours; every summer affords battles and sieges, and the world is filled with ravage, bloodshed, and devastation: this sanguinary fury at length subsides, and nations are divided into factions, by controversies about points that will never be decided. Men then grow weary of debate and altercation, and apply themselves to the arts of profit; trading companies are formed, manufactures improved, and navigation extended; and nothing is any longer thought on, but the increase and preservation of property, the artifices of getting money, and the pleasures of spending it.

The present age, if we consider chiefly the state of our own country, may be styled with great propriety *The Age of Authors;* for, perhaps, there never was a time in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profession and employment, were posting with ardour so general to the press. The province of writing was formerly left to those, who by study, or appearance of study, were supposed to have gained knowledge unattainable by the busy part of mankind; but in these enlightened days, every man is qualified to instruct every other man: and he that beats the anvil, or guides the plough, not content with supplying corporal necessities, amuses himself in the hours of leisure with providing intellectual pleasures for his countrymen.

It may be observed, that of this, as of other evils, complaints have been made by every generation; but though it may, perhaps, be true, that at all times more have been willing than have been able to write, yet there is no reason for believing, that the dogmatical legions of the present race were ever equalled in number by any former period: for so widely is spread the itch of literary praise, that almost every man is an author either in act or in purpose; has either bestowed his favours on the public, or withholds them, that they may be more seasonably offered, or made more worthy of acceptance.

In former times, the pen, like the sword, was considered as consigned by nature to the hands of men; the ladies contented themselves with private virtues and domestic excellence; and a female writer, like a female warrior, was considered as a kind of eccentric being, that deviated, however illustriously, from her due sphere of motion, and was, therefore, rather to be gazed at with wonder, than countenanced by imitation. But as in the times past are said to have been a nation of Amazons, who drew the bow and wielded the battle-axe, formed encampments and wasted nations, the revolution of years has now produced a generation of Amazons of the pen, who with the spirit of their predecessors have set masculine tyranny at defiance, asserted their claim to the regions of science, and seem resolved to contest the usurpation of virility.

Some, indeed, there are of both sexes, who are authors only in desire, but have not yet attained the power of executing their intentions; whose performances have not arrived at bulk sufficient to form a volume, or who have not the confidence, however impatient of nameless obscurity, to solicit openly the assistance of the printer. Among these are the innumerable correspondents of public papers, who are always offering assistance which no man will receive, and suggesting hints that are never taken, and who complain loudly of the perverseness and arrogance of authors, lament their insensibility of their own interest, and fill the coffee-houses with dark stories of performances by eminent hands, which have been offered and rejected.

To what cause this universal eagerness of writing can be properly ascribed, I have not yet been able to discover. It is said, that every art is propagated in proportion to the rewards conferred upon it; a position from which a stranger would naturally infer, that literature was now blessed with patronage far transcending the candour or munificence of the Augustan age, that

the road to greatness was open to none but authors, and that by writing alone riches and honour were to be obtained.

But since it is true, that writers, like other competitors, are very little disposed to favour one another, it is not to be expected that at a time when every man writes, any man will patronize; and accordingly, there is not one that I can recollect at present, who professes the least regard for the votaries of science, invites the addresses of learned men, or seems to hope for reputation from any pen but his own.

The cause, therefore, of this epidemical conspiracy for the destruction of paper, must remain a secret; nor can I discover, whether we owe it to the influences of the constellations, or the intemperature of seasons: whether the long continuance of the wind at any single point, or intoxicating vapours exhaled from the earth, have turned our nobles and our peasants, our soldiers and traders, our men and women, all into wits, philosophers, and writers.

It is, indeed, of more importance to search out the cure than the cause of this intellectual malady; and he would deserve well of his country, who, instead of amusing himself with conjectural speculations, should find means of persuading the peer to inspect his steward's accounts, or repair the rural mansion of his ancestors, who could replace the tradesman behind his counter, and send back the farmer to the mattock and the flail.

General irregularities are known in time to remedy themselves. By the constitution of ancient Egypt, the priesthood was continually increasing, till at length there was no people beside themselves; the establishment was then dissolved, and the number of priests was reduced and limited. Thus among us, writers will perhaps be multiplied, till no readers will be found, and then the ambition of writing must necessarily cease.

But as it will be long before the cure is thus gradually effected, and the evil should be stopped, if it be possible, before it rises to so great a height, I could wish that both sexes would fix their thoughts upon some salutary considerations, which might repress their ardour for that reputation which not one of many thousands is fated to obtain.

Let it be deeply impressed and frequently recollected, that he who has not obtained the proper qualifications of an author, can have no excuse for the arrogance of writing, but the power of imparting to mankind something necessary to be known. A man uneducated or unlettered may sometimes start a useful thought, or make a lucky discovery, or obtain by chance some secret of nature, or some intelligence of facts, of which the most enlightened mind may be ignorant, and which it is better to reveal, though by a rude and unskilful communication, than to lose for ever by suppressing it.

But few will be justified by this plea; for of the innumerable books and pamphlets that have overflowed the nation, scarce one has made any addition to real knowledge, or contained more than a transposition of common sentiments and a repetition of common phrases.

It will be naturally inquired, when the man who feels an inclination to write, may venture to suppose himself properly qualified; and, since every man is inclined to think well of his own intellect, by what test he may try his abilities, without hazarding the contempt or resentment of the public.

The first qualification of a writer, is a perfect knowledge of the subject which he undertakes to treat; since we cannot teach what we do not know, nor can properly undertake to instruct others while we are ourselves in want of instruction. The next requisite is, that he be master of the language in which he delivers his sentiments: if he treats of science and demonstration, that he has attained a style clear, pure, nervous, and expressive; if his topics be probable and persuasory, that he be able to recommend them by the superaddition of elegance and imagery, to display the colours of varied diction, and pour forth the music of modulated periods.

If it be again inquired, upon what principles any man shall conclude that he wants those powers, it may be readily answered, that no end is attained but by the proper means; he only can rationally presume that he understands a subject, who has read and compared the writers that have hitherto discussed it, familiarized their arguments to himself by long meditation, consulted the foundations of different systems, and separated truth from error by a rigorous examination.

In like manner, he only has a right to suppose that he can express his thoughts, whatever they are, with perspicuity or elegance, who has carefully perused the best authors, accurately noted their diversities of style, diligently selected the best modes of diction, and familiarized them by long habits of attentive practice.

No man is a rhetorician or philosopher by chance. He who knows that he undertakes to write on questions which he has never studied, may without hesitation determine, that he is about to waste his own time and that of his reader, and expose himself to the derision of those whom he aspires to instruct; he that without forming his style by the study of the best models hastens to obtrude his compositions on the public, may be certain, that whatever hope or flattery may suggest, he shall shock the learned ear with barbarisms, and contribute, wherever his work shall be received, to the depravation of taste and the corruption of language.

No. 119.] Tuesday, Dec. 25, 1753.

atius regnes avidum domando
Spiritum, quam si Lybiam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni.

By virtue's precepts to control
The thirsty cravings of the soul,
Is over wider realms to reign
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Lybia join,
And both the Carthages were thine. Francis.

When Socrates was asked, "which of mortal men was to be accounted nearest to the *gods* in happiness?" he answered, "that man who is in want of the fewest things."

In this answer, Socrates, left it to be guessed by his auditors, whether, by the exemption from want which was to constitute happiness he

meant amplitude of possessions or contraction of desire. And, indeed, there is so little difference between them, that Alexander the Great confessed the inhabitant of a tub the next man to the master of the world; and left a declaration to future ages, that if he was not Alexander, he should wish to be Diogenes.

These two states, however, though they resemble each other in their consequence, differ widely with respect to the facility with which they may be attained. To make great acquisitions can happen to very few; and in the uncertainty of human affairs, to many it will be incident to labour without reward, and to lose what they already possess by endeavours to make it more; some will always want abilities, and others opportunities to accumulate wealth. It is therefore happy, that nature has allowed us a more certain and easy road to plenty; every man may grow rich by contracting his wishes, and by quiet acquiescence in what has been given him, supply the absence of more.

Yet so far is almost every man from emulating the happiness of the gods, by any other means than grasping at their power, that it seems to be the great business of life to create wants as fast as they are satisfied. It has been long observed by moralists, that every man squanders or loses a great part of that life, of which every man knows and deplores the shortness: and it may be remarked with equal justness, that though every man laments his own insufficiency to his happiness, and knows himself a necessitous and precarious being, incessantly soliciting the assistance of others, and feeling wants which his own art or strength cannot supply; yet there is no man, who does not, by the superaddition of unnatural cares, render himself still more dependent; who does not create an artificial poverty, and suffer himself to feel pain for the want of that, of which, when it is gained, he can have no enjoyment.

It must, indeed, be allowed, that as we lose part of our time because it steals away silent and invisible, and many an hour is passed before we recollect that it is passing; so unnatural desires insinuate themselves unobserved into the mind, and we do not perceive that they are gaining upon us, till the pain which they give us awakens us to notice. No man is sufficiently vigilant to take account of every minute of his life, or to watch every motion of his heart. Much of our time likewise is sacrificed to custom: we trifle, because we see others trifle; in the same manner we catch from example the contagion of desire; we see all about us busied in pursuit of imaginary good, and begin to bustle in the same chase, lest greater activity should triumph over us.

It is true that to man as a member of society, many things become necessary, which, perhaps, in a state of nature are superfluous; and that many things not absolutely necessary, are yet so useful and convenient, that they cannot easily be spared. I will make yet a more ample and liberal concession. In opulent states, and regular governments, the temptations to wealth and rank, and to the distinctions that follow them, are such as no force of understanding finds it easy to resist.

If, therefore, I saw the quiet of life disturbed only by endeavours after wealth and honour; by solicitude, which the world, whether justly or not, considered as important; I should scarcely have had courage to inculcate any precepts of moderation and forbearance. He that is engaged in a pursuit, in which all mankind profess to be his rivals, is supported by the authority of all mankind in the prosecution of his design, and will, therefore, scarcely stop to hear the lectures of a solitary philosopher. Nor am I certain, that the accumulation of honest gain ought to be hindered, or the ambition of just honours always to be repressed. Whatever can enable the possessor to confer any benefit upon others, may be desired upon virtuous principles; and we ought not too rashly to accuse any man of intending to confine the influence of his acquisitions to himself.

But if we look round upon mankind, whom shall we find among those that fortune permits to form their own manners, that is not tormenting himself with a wish for something, of which all the pleasure and all the benefit will cease at the moment of attainment? One man is beggaring his posterity to build a house, which when finished he never will inhabit; another is levelling mountains to open a prospect, which when he has enjoyed it, he can enjoy no more; another is painting ceilings, carving wainscot, and filling his apartments with costly furniture, only that some neighbouring house may not be richer or finer than his own.

That splendour and elegance are not desirable, I am not so abstracted from life as to inculcate; but if we inquire closely into the reason for which they are esteemed, we shall find them valued principally as evidences of wealth. Nothing, therefore, can show greater depravity of understanding, than to delight in the show when the reality is wanting; or voluntarily to become poor, that strangers may for a time imagine us to be rich.

But there are yet minuter objects and more trifling anxieties. Men may be found, who are kept from sleep by the want of a shell particularly variegated; who are wasting their lives in stratagems to obtain a book in a language which they do not understand; who pine with envy at the flowers of another man's parterre; who hover like vultures round the owner of a fossil, in hopes to plunder his cabinet at his death; and who would not much regret to see a street in flames, if a box of medals might be scattered in the tumult.

He that imagines me to speak of these sages in terms exaggerated and hyperbolical, has conversed but little with the race of virtuosos. A slight acquaintance with their studies, and a few visits to their assemblies, would inform him, that nothing is so worthless, but that prejudice and caprice can give it value; nor any thing of so little use, but that by indulging an idle competition or unreasonable pride, a man may make it to himself one of the necessaries of life.

Desires like these, I may surely, without incurring the censure of moroseness, advise every man to repel when they invade his mind; or if he admits them, never to allow them any greater influence than is necessary to give petty employments the power of pleasing, and diversify the day with slight amusements.

An ardent wish, whatever be its object, will always be able to interrupt tranquillity. What

we believe ourselves to want, torments us not in proportion to its real value, but according to the estimation by which we have rated it in our own minds; in some diseases, the patient has been observed to long for food, which scarce any extremity of hunger would in health have compelled him to swallow; but while his organs were thus depraved, the craving was irresistible, nor could any rest be obtained till it was appeased by compliance. Of the same nature are the irregular appetites of the mind: though they are often excited by trifles, they are equally disquieting with real wants; the Roman, who wept at the death of his lamprey, felt the same degree of sorrow that extorts tears on other occasions.

Inordinate desires, of whatever kind, ought to be repressed upon a yet higher consideration; they must be considered as enemies not only to happiness but to virtue. There are men, among those commonly reckoned the learned and the wise, who spare no stratagems to remove a competitor at an auction, who will sink the price of a rarity at the expense of truth, and whom it is not safe to trust alone in a library or cabinet. These are faults, which the fraternity seem to look upon as jocular mischiefs, or to think excused by the violence of temptation: but I shall always fear that he who accustoms himself to fraud in little things, wants only opportunity to practise it in greater; "he that has hardened himself by killing a sheep," says Pythagoras, "will with less reluctance shed the blood of a man."

To prize every thing according to its *real* use, ought to be the aim of a rational being. There are few things which can much conduce to happiness, and, therefore, few things to be ardently desired. He that looks upon the business and bustle of the world, with the philosophy with which Socrates surveyed the fair at Athens, will turn away at last with his exclamation, "How many things are here which I do not want!"

No. 120.] SATURDAY, DEC. 29, 175'

——Ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet. OVID.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded bless'd before he die. ADDISON.

THE numerous miseries of human life have extorted in all ages a universal complaint. The wisest of men terminated all his experiments in search of happiness, by the mournful confession, that "all is vanity;" and the ancient patriarchs lamented, that "the days of their pilgrimage were few and evil."

There is, indeed, no topic on which it is more superfluous to accumulate authorities, nor any assertion of which our own eyes will more easily discover, or our sensations more frequently impress the truth, than, that misery is the lot of man, that our present state is a state of danger and infelicity.

When we take the most distant prospect of life, what does it present us but a chaos of unhappiness, a confused and tumultuous scene of labour and contest, disappointment and defeat? If we view past ages in the reflection of history what do they offer to our meditation but crimes and calamities? One year is distinguished by a famine, another by an earthquake: kingdoms are made desolate, sometimes by wars, and sometimes by pestilence; the peace of the world is interrupted at one time by the caprices of a tyrant, at another by the rage of the conqueror, The memory is stored only with vicissitudes of evil; and the happiness, such as it is, of one part of mankind, is found to arise commonly from sanguinary success, from victories which confer upon them the power, not so much of improving life by any new enjoyment, as of inflicting misery on others, and gratifying their own pride by comparative greatness.

But by him that examined life with a more close attention, the happiness of the world will be found still less than it appears. In some intervals of public prosperity, or to use terms more proper, in some intermissions of calamity, a general diffusion of happiness may seem to overspread a people; all is triumph and exultation, jollity and plenty; there are no public fears and dangers, and "no complainings in the streets." But the condition of individuals is very little mended by this general calm; pain and malice and discontent still continue their havoc; the silent depredation goes incessantly forward; and the grave continues to be filled by the victims of sorrow.

He that enters a gay assembly, beholds the cheerfulness displayed in every countenance, and finds all sitting vacant and disengaged, with no other attention than to give or receive pleasure, would naturally imagine that he had reached at last the metropolis of felicity, the place sacred to gladness of heart, from whence all fear and anxiety were irreversibly excluded. Such, indeed, we may often find to be the opinion of those, who from a lower station look up to the pomp and gayety which they cannot reach; but who is there of those who frequent these luxurious assemblies, that will not confess his own uneasiness, or cannot recount the vexations and distresses that prey upon the lives of his gay companions?

The world, in its best state, is nothing more than a larger assembly of beings, combining to counterfeit happiness which they do not feel, employing every art and contrivance to embellish life, and to hide their real condition from the eyes of one another.

The species of happiness most obvious to the observation of others, is that which depends upon the goods of fortune; yet even this is often fictitious. There is in the world more poverty than is generally imagined; not only because many whose possessions are large have desires still larger, and many measure their wants by the gratifications which others enjoy: but great numbers are pressed by real necessities which it is their chief ambition to conceal, and are forced to purchase the appearance of competence and cheerfulness at the expense of many comforts and conveniences of life.

Many, however, are confessedly rich, and many more are sufficiently removed from all danger of real poverty: but it has been long ago remarked, that money cannot purchase quiet; the highest of mankind can promise themselves no exemption from that discord or suspicion, by

which the sweetness of domestic retirement is destroyed; and must always be even more exposed, in the same degree as they are elevated above others, to the treachery of dependents, the calumny of defamers, and the violence of opponents.

Affliction is inseparable from our present state; it adheres to all the inhabitants of this world, in different proportions indeed, but with an allotment which seems very little regulated by our own conduct.

It has been the boast of some swelling moralists, that every man's fortune was in his own power, that prudence supplied the place of all other divinities, and that happiness is the unfailing consequence of virtue. But, surely, the quiver of Omnipotence is stored with arrows, against which the shield of human virtue, however adamantine it has been boasted, is held up in vain: we do not always suffer by our crimes; we are not always protected by our innocence.

A good man is by no means exempt from the danger of suffering by the crimes of others; even his goodness may raise him enemies of implacable malice and restless perseverance: the good man has never been warranted by Heaven from the treachery of friends, the disobedience of children, or the dishonesty of a wife; he may see his cares made useless by profusion, his instructions defeated by perverseness, and his kindness rejected by ingratitude: he may languish under the infamy of false accusations, or perish reproachfully by an unjust sentence.

A good man is subject, like other mortals, to all the influences of natural evil; his harvest is not spared by the tempest, nor his cattle by the murrain; his house flames like others in a conflagration; nor have his ships any peculiar power of resisting hurricanes: his mind, however elevated, inhabits a body subject to innumerable casualties, of which he must always share the dangers and the pains; he bears about him the seeds of disease, and may linger away a great part of his life under the tortures of the gout or stone; at one time groaning with insufferable anguish, at another dissolved in listlessness and languor.

From this general and indiscriminate distribution of misery, the moralists have always derived one of their strongest moral arguments for a future state; for since the common events of the present life happey alike to the good and bad, it follows from the justice of the Supreme Being, that there must be another state of existence, in which a just retribution shall be made, and every man shall be happy and miserable according to his works.

The miseries of life may, perhaps, afford some proof of a future state, compared as well with the mercy as the justice of God. It is scarcely to be imagined that Infinite Benevolence would create a being capable of enjoying so much more than is here to be enjoyed, and qualified by nature to prolong pain by remembrance, and anticipate it by terror, if he was not designed for something nobler and better than a state, in which many of his faculties can serve only for his torment: in which he is to be importuned by desires that never can be satisfied, to feel many evils which he had no power to avoid, and to fear many which he shall never feel: there will surely come a time, when every capacity of happiness shall be filled, and none shall be wretched but by his own fault.

In the mean time, it is by affliction chiefly that the heart of man is purified, and that the thoughts are fixed upon a better state. Prosperity, allayed and imperfect as it is, has power to intoxicate the imagination, to fix the mind upon the present scene, to produce confidence and elation, and to make him who enjoys affluence and honours forget the hand by which they were bestowed. It is seldom that we are otherwise, than by affliction, awakened to a sense of our own imbecility, or taught to know how little all our acquisitions can conduce to safety or to quiet; and how justly we may ascribe to the superintendence of a higher Power, those blessings which in the wantonness of success we considered as the attainments of our policy or courage.

Nothing confers so much ability to resist the temptations that perpetually surround us, as an habitual consideration of the shortness of life, and the uncertainty of those pleasures that solicit our pursuit; and this consideration can be inculcated only by affliction. "O Death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to a man that lives at ease in his possessions!" If our present state were one continued succession of delights, or one uniform flow of calmness and tranquillity, we should never willingly think upon its end; death would then surely surprise us as "a thief in the night;" and our task of duty would remain unfinished, till "the night came when no man can work."

While affliction thus prepares us for felicity, we may console ourselves under its pressures, by remembering, that they are no particular marks of divine displeasure: since all the distresses of persecution have been suffered by those "of whom the world was not worthy;" and the Redeemer of mankind himself was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief!"

No. 126.] SATURDAY, JAN. 19, 1754.

——Steriles nec legit arenas
Ut caneret paucis, mersitque hoc pulvere verum.
LUCAN

Canst thou believe the vast eternal Mind
Was e'er to Syrts and Lybian sands confined?
That he would choose this waste, this barren ground,
To teach the thin inhabitants around,
And leave his truth in wilds and deserts drown'd?

THERE has always prevailed among that part of mankind that addict their minds to speculation, a propensity to talk much of the delights of retirement: and some of the most pleasing compositions produced in every age contain descriptions of the peace and happiness of a country life.

I know not whether those who thus ambitiously repeat the praises of solitude, have always considered, how much they depreciate mankind by declaring, that whatever is excellent or desirable is to be obtained by departing from them; that the assistance which we may derive from one another, is not equivalent to the evils which we have to fear; that the kindness of a few is overbalanced by the malice of many; and that the protection of society is too dearly purchased by encountering its dangers and enduring its oppressions.

These specious representations of solitary happiness, however opprobrious to human nature, have so far spread their influence over the world, that almost every man delights his imagination with the hopes of obtaining some time an opportunity of retreat. Many, indeed, who enjoy retreat only in imagination, content themselves with believing, that another year will transport them to rural tranquillity, and die while they talk of doing what, if they had lived longer, they would never have done. But many likewise there are, either of greater resolution or more credulity, who in earnest try the state which they have been taught to think thus secure from cares and dangers; and retire to privacy, either that they may improve their happiness, increase their knowledge, or exalt their virtue.

The greater part of the admirers of solitude, as of all other classes of mankind, have no higher or remoter view, than the present gratification of their passions. Of these, some, haughty and impetuous, fly from society only because they cannot bear to repay to others the regard which themselves exact; and think no state of life eligible, but that which places them out of the reach of censure or control, and affords them opportunities of living in a perpetual compliance with their own inclinations, without the necessity of regulating their actions by any other man's convenience or opinion.

There are others, of minds more delicate and tender, easily offended by every deviation from rectitude, soon disgusted by ignorance or impertinence, and always expecting from the conversation of mankind more elegance, purity, and truth, than the mingled mass of life will easily afford. Such men are in haste to retire from grossness, falsehood, and brutality; and hope to find in private habitations at least a negative felicity, an exemption from the shocks and perturbations with which public scenes are continually distressing them.

To neither of these votaries will solitude afford that content, which she has been taught so lavishly to promise. The man of arrogance will quickly discover, that by escaping from his opponents he has lost his flatterers, that greatness is nothing where it is not seen, and power nothing where it cannot be felt: and he whose faculties are employed in too close an observation of failings and defects, will find his condition very little mended by transferring his attention from others to himself: he will probably soon come back in quest of new objects, and be glad to keep his captiousness employed on any character rather than his own.

Others are seduced into solitude merely by the authority of great names, and expect to find those charms in tranquillity which have allured statesmen and conquerors to the shades: these likewise are apt to wonder at their disappointment, for want of considering, that those whom they aspire to imitate, carried with them to their country seats minds full fraught with subjects of reflection, the consciousness of great merit, the memory of illustrious actions, the knowledge of important events, and the seeds of mighty designs to be ripened by future meditation. Solitude was to such men a release from fatigue, and an opportunity of usefulness. But what can retirement confer upon him, who having done nothing, can receive no support from his own importance, who having known nothing can find no entertainment in reviewing the past, and who intending nothing can form no hopes from prospects of the future? He can, surely, take no wiser course than that of losing himself again in the crowd, and filling the vacuities of his mind with the news of the day.

Others consider solitude as the parent of philosophy, and retire in expectation of greater intimacies with science, as Numa repaired to the groves when he conferred with Egeria. These men have not always reason to repent. Some studies require a continued prosecution of the same train of thought, such as is too often interrupted by the petty avocations of common life. sometimes, likewise, it is necessary, that a multiplicity of objects be at once present to the mind; and every thing, therefore, must be kept at a distance, which may perplex the memory, or dissipate the attention.

But though learning may be conferred by solitude, its application must be attained by general converse. He has learned to no purpose, that is not able to teach; and he will always teach unsuccessfully, who cannot recommend his sentiments by his diction or address.

Even the acquisition of knowledge is often much facilitated by the advantages of society: he that never compares his notions with those of others readily acquiesces in his first thoughts, and very seldom discovers the objections which may be raised against his opinions: he, therefore, often thinks himself in possession of truth, when he is only fondling an error long since exploded. He that has neither companions nor rivals in his studies, will always applaud his own progress, and think highly of his performances, because he knows not that others have equalled or excelled him. And I am afraid it may be added, that the student who withdraws himself from the world, will soon feel that ardour extinguished which praise and emulation had enkindled, and take the advantage of secrecy to sleep, rather than to labour.

There remains yet another set of recluses, whose intention entitles them to higher respect, and whose motives deserve a more serious consideration. These retire from the world, not merely to bask in ease or gratify curiosity; but that being disengaged from common cares, they may employ more time in the duties of religion: that they may regulate their actions with stricter vigilance, and purify their thoughts by more frequent meditation.

To men thus elevated above the mists of mortality, I am far from presuming myself qualified to give directions. On him that appears "to pass through things temporary," with no other care than "not to lose finally the things eternal," I look with such veneration as inclines me to approve his conduct in the whole, without a minute examination of its parts; yet I could never forbear to wish, that while vice is every day multiplying seducements, and stalking forth with more hardened effrontery, virtue would not withdraw the influence of her presence, or forbear to assert her natural dignity by open and undaunted perseverance in the right. Piety practised in solitude, like the flower that blooms in the deserts, may give its fragrance to the winds of heaven, and delight those unbodied spirits that survey the works of God and the actions of men; but it

bestows no assistance upon earthly beings, and however free from taints of impurity, yet wants the sacred splendour of beneficence.

Our Maker, who though he gave us such varieties of temper and such difference of powers, yet designed us all for happiness, undoubtedly intended, that we should obtain that happiness by different means. Some are unable to resist the temptations of importunity, or the impetuosity of their own passions incited by the force of present temptations: of these it is undoubtedly the duty to fly from enemies which they cannot conquer, and to cultivate, in the calm of solitude, that virtue which is too tender to endure the tempest of public life. But there are others, whose passions grow more strong and irregular in privacy; and who cannot maintain a uniform tenour of virtue, but by exposing their manners to the public eye, and assisting the admonitions of conscience with the fear of infamy: for such, it is dangerous to exclude all witnesses of their conduct till they have formed strong habits of virtue, and weakened their passions by frequent victories. But there is a higher order of men so inspired with ardour, and so fortified with resolution, that the world passes before them without influence or regard: these ought to consider themselves as appointed the guardians of mankind: they are placed in an evil world, to exhibit public examples of good life: and may be said, when they withdraw to solitude, to desert the station which Providence assigned them.

No. 128.] SATURDAY, JAN. 26, 1754.

Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed varriis illudit partibus. HOR.

When in a wood we leave the certain way,
One error fools us, though we various stray,
Some to the left, and some to t'other side. FRANCIS.

IT is common among all the classes of mankind, to charge each other with trifling away life: every man looks on the occupation or amusement of his neighbour as something below the dignity of our nature, and unworthy of the attention of a rational being.

A man who considers the paucity of the wants of nature, and who, being acquainted with the various means by which all manual occupations are now facilitated, observes what numbers are supported by the labour of a few, would, indeed, be inclined to wonder, how the multitudes who are exempted from the necessity of working either for themselves or others, find business to fill up the vacuities of life. The greater part of mankind neither card the fleece, dig the mine, fell the wood, nor gather in the harvest; they neither tend herds nor build houses; in what then are they employed?

This is certainly a question, which a distant prospect of the world will not enable us to answer. We find all ranks and ages mingled together in a tumultuous confusion, with haste in their motions, and eagerness in their looks; but what they have to pursue or avoid, a more minute observation must inform us.

When we analyze the crowd into individuals, it soon appears that the passions and imaginations of men will not easily suffer them to be idle; we see things coveted merely because they are rare, and pursued because they are fugitive; we see men conspire to fix an arbitrary value on that which is worthless in itself, and then contend for the possession. One is a collector of fossils, of which he knows no other use than to show them; and when he has stocked his own repository, grieves that the stones which he has left behind him should be picked up by another. The florist nurses a tulip, and repines that his rival's beds enjoy the same showers and sunshine with his own. This man is hurrying to a concert, only lest others should have heard the new musician before him; another bursts from his company to the play, because he fancies himself the patron of an actress; some spend the morning in consultations with their tailor, and some in directions to their cook; some are forming parties for cards, and some laying wagers at a horse-race.

It cannot, I think, be denied, that some of these lives are passed in trifles, in occupations by which the busy neither benefit themselves nor others, and by which no man could be long engaged, who seriously considered what he was doing, or had knowledge enough to compare what he is with what he might be made. However, as people who have the same inclination generally flock together, every trifler is kept in countenance by the sight of others as unprofitably active as himself; by kindling the heat of competition, he in time thinks himself important, and by having his mind intensely engaged, he is secured from weariness of himself.

Some degree of self approbation is always the reward of diligence; and I cannot, therefore, but consider the laborious cultivation of petty pleasures, as a more happy and more virtuous disposition, than that universal contempt and haughty negligence, which is sometimes associated with powerful faculties, but is often assumed by indolence when it disowns its name, and aspires to the appellation of greatness of mind.

It has been long observed, that drollery and ridicule is the most easy kind of wit: let it be added, that contempt and arrogance is the easiest philosophy. To find some objection to every thing, and to dissolve in perpetual lazincss under pretence that occasions are wanting to call forth activity, to laugh at those who are ridiculously busy without setting an example of more rational industry, is no less in the power of the meanest than of the highest intellects.

Our present state has placed us at once in such different relations, that every human employment, which is not a visible and immediate act of goodness, will be in some respect or other subject to contempt: but it is true, likewise, that almost every act, which is not directly vicious, is in some respect beneficial and laudable. "I often," says Bruyere, "observe from my window, two beings of erect form and amiable countenance, endowed with the powers of reason, able to clothe their thoughts in language, and convey their notions to each other. They rise early in the morning, and are every day employed till sunset in rubbing two smooth stones together, or, in other terms, in polishing marble."

"If lions could paint," says the fable, "in the room of those pictures which exhibit men van

quishing lions, we should see lions feeding upon men." If the stone-cutter could have written like Bruyere, what would he have replied?

"I look up," says he, "every day from my shop upon a man whom the idlers, who stand still to gaze upon my work, often celebrate as a wit and a philosopher. I often perceive his face clouded with care, and am told that his taper is sometimes burning at midnight. The sight of a man who works so much harder than myself, excited my curiosity. I heard no sound of tools in his apartment, and, therefore, could not imagine what he was doing; but was told at last, that he was writing descriptions of mankind, who when he had described them would live just as they had lived before; that he sat up whole nights to change a sentence, because the sound of a letter was too often repeated: that he was often disquieted with doubts, about the propriety of a word which every body understood; that he would hesitate between two expressions equally proper, till he could not fix his choice but by consulting his friends; that he will run from one end of Paris to the other, for an opportunity of reading a period to a nice ear; that if a single line is heard with coldness and inattention, he returns home dejected and disconsolate; and that by all this care and labour, he hopes only to make a little book, which at last will teach no useful art, and which none who has it not will perceive himself to want. I have often wondered for what end such a being as this was sent into the world; and should be glad to see those who live thus foolishly, seized by an order of the government, and obliged to labour at some useful occupation."

Thus, by a partial and imperfect representation, may every thing be made equally ridiculous. He that gazed with contempt on human beings rubbing stones together, might have prolonged the same amusement by walking through the city, and seeing others with looks of importance heaping one brick upon another; or by rambling into the country, where he might observe other creatures of the same kind driving in pieces of sharp iron into the clay, or, in the language of men less enlightened, ploughing the field.

As it is thus easy by a detail of minute circumstances to make every thing little, so it is not difficult by an aggregation of effects to make every thing great. The polisher of marble may be forming ornaments for the palaces of virtue, and the schools of science: or providing tables on which the actions of heroes and the discoveries of sages shall be recorded, for the incitement and instruction of future generations. The mason is exercising one of the principal arts by which reasoning beings are distinguished from the brute, the art to which life owes much of its safety and all its convenience, by which we are secured from the inclemency of the seasons, and fortified against the ravages of hostility; and the ploughman is changing the face of nature, diffusing plenty and happiness over kingdoms, and compelling the earth to give food to her inhabitants.

Greatness and littleness are terms merely comparative; and we err in our estimation of things, because we measure them by some wrong standard. The trifler proposes to himself only to equal or excel some other trifler, and is happy or miserable as he succeeds or miscarries: the man of sedentary desire and unactive ambition sits comparing his power with his wishes; and makes his inability to perform things impossible, an excuse to himself for performing nothing. Man can only form a just estimate of his own actions, by making his power the test of his performance, by comparing what he does with what he can do. Whoever steadily perseveres in the exertion of all his faculties, does what is great with respect to himself; and what will not be despised by Him, who has given to all created beings their different abilities: he faithfully performs the task of life, within whatever limits his labours may be confined, or how soon soever they may be forgotten.

We can conceive so much more than we can accomplish, that whoever tries his own actions by his imagination, may appear despicable in his own eyes. He that despises for its littleness any thing really useful, has no pretensions to applaud the grandeur of his conceptions; since nothing but narrowness of mind hinders him from seeing, that by pursuing the same principles every thing limited will appear contemptible.

He that neglects the care of his family, whilst his benevolence expands itself in scheming the happiness of imaginary kingdoms, might with equal reason sit on a throne dreaming of universal empire, and of the diffusion of blessings over all the globe: yet even this globe is little, compared with the system of matter within our view; and that system barely something more than nonentity, compared with the boundless regions of space, to which neither eye nor imagination can extend.

From conceptions, therefore, of what we might have been, and from wishes to be what we are not, conceptions that we know to be foolish, and wishes which we feel to be vain, we must necessarily descend to the consideration of what we are. We have powers very scanty in their utmost extent, but which in different men are differently proportioned. Suitably to these powers we have duties prescribed, which we must neither decline for the sake of delighting ourselves with easier amusements, nor overlook in idle contemplation of greater excellence or more extensive comprehension.

In order to the right conduct of our lives, we must remember that we are not born to please ourselves. He that studies simply his own satisfaction, will always find the proper business of his station too hard or to easy for him. But if we bear continually in mind, our relation to The Father of Being, by whom we are placed in the world, and who has allotted us the part which we are to bear in the general system of life, we shall be easily persuaded to resign our own inclinations to Unerring Wisdom, and do the work decreed for us with chearfulness and diligence.

No. 131.] TUESDAY, FEB. 5, 1754.

——— *Misce*
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus. JUVENAL.

And mingle something of our times to please.
DRYDEN, JUN.

FONTENELLE, in his panegyric on Sir Isaac Newton, closes a long enumeration of that great phi

losopher's virtues and attainments, with an observation, that "he was not distinguished from other men by any singularity either natural or affected."

It is an eminent instance of Newton's superiority to the rest of mankind, that he was able to separate knowledge from those weaknesses by which knowledge is generally disgraced; that he was able to excel in science and wisdom without purchasing them by the neglect of little things; and that he stood alone, merely because he had left the rest of mankind behind him, not because he deviated from the beaten track.

Whoever, after the example of Plutarch, should compare the lives of illustrious men, might set this part of Newton's character to view with great advantage, by opposing it to that of Bacon, perhaps the only man of latter ages who has any pretensions to dispute with him the palm of genius or science.

Bacon, after he had added to a long and careful contemplation of almost every other object of knowledge a curious inspection into common life, and after having surveyed nature as a philosopher, had examined "men's business and bosoms" as a statesman; yet failed so much in the conduct of domestic affairs, that, in the most lucrative post to which a great and wealthy kingdom could advance him, he felt all the miseries of distressful poverty, and committed all the crimes to which poverty incites. Such were at once his negligence and rapacity, that, as it is said, he would gain by unworthy practices that money, which, when so acquired, his servants might steal from one end of the table, while he sat studious and abstracted at the other.

As scarcely any man has reached the excellence, very few have sunk to the weakness of Bacon: but almost all the studious tribe as they obtain any participation of his knowledge, feel likewise some contagion of his defects; and obstruct the veneration which learning would procure, by follies greater or less, to which only learning could betray them.

It has been formerly remarked by The Guardian, that the world punishes with too great severity the error of those, who imagine that the ignorance of little things may be compensated by the knowledge of great; for so it is, that as more can detect petty failings than can distinguish or esteem great qualifications, and as mankind is in general more easily disposed to censure than to admiration, contempt is often incurred by slight mistakes, which real virtue or usefulness cannot counterbalance.

Yet such mistakes and inadvertencies, it is not easy for a man deeply immersed in study to avoid; no man can become qualified for the common intercourses of life, by private meditation; the manners of the world are not a regular system, planned by philosophers upon settled principles, in which every cause has a congruous effect, and one part has a just reference to another. Of the fashions prevalent in every country, a few have arisen, perhaps, from particular temperatures of the climate; a few more from the constitution of the government; but the greater part have grown up by chance; been started by caprice, been contrived by affectation, or borrowed without any just motives of choice from other countries.

Of all these, the savage that hunts his prey upon the mountains, and the sage that speculates in his closet, must necessarily live in equal ignorance; yet by the observation of these trifles it is, that the ranks of mankind are kept in order that the address of one to another is regulated, and the general business of the world carried on with facility and method.

These things, therefore, though small in themselves, become great by their frequency; and he very much mistakes his own interest, who to the unavoidable unskilfulness of abstraction and retirement, adds a voluntary neglect of common forms, and increases the disadvantages of a studious course of life by an arrogant contempt of those practices, by which others endeavour to gain favour and multiply friendships.

A real and interior disdain of fashion and ceremony is, indeed, not very often to be found; much the greater part of those who pretend to laugh at foppery and formality, secretly wish to have possessed those qualifications which they pretend to despise; and because they find it difficult to wash away the tincture which they have so deeply imbibed, endeavour to harden themselves in a sullen approbation of their own colour. Neutrality is a state into which the busy passions of man cannot easily subside; and he who is in danger of the pangs of envy, is generally forced to recreate his imagination with an effort of comfort.

Some, however, may be found, who, supported by the consciousness of great abilities, and elevated by a long course of reputation and applause, voluntarily consign themselves to singularity, affect to cross the roads of life because they know that they shall not be jostled, and indulge a boundless gratification of will because they perceive that they shall be quietly obeyed. Men of this kind are generally known by the name of *Humourists*, an appellation by which he that has obtained it, and can be contented to keep it, is set free at once from the shackles of fashion: and can go in or out, sit or stand, be talkative or silent, gloomy or merry, advance absurdities or oppose demonstration, without any other reprehension from mankind than that it is his way, that he is an odd fellow, and must be let alone.

This seems to many an easy passport through the various factions of mankind; and those on whom it is bestowed, appear too frequently to consider the patience with which their caprices are suffered as an undoubted evidence of their own importance, of a genius to which submission is universally paid, and whose irregularities are only considered as consequences of its vigour. These peculiarities, however, are always found to spot a character, though they may not totally obscure it; and he who expects from mankind, that they should give up established customs in compliance with his single will, and exacts that deference which he does not pay, may be endured, but can never be approved.

Singularity is, I think, in its own nature universally and invariably displeasing. In whatever respect a man differs from others, he must be considered by them as either worse or better; by being better, it is well known that a man gains admiration oftener than love, since all approbation of his practice must necessarily condemn him that gives it; and though a man often pleases by inferiority, there are few who desire

to give such pleasure. Yet the truth is, that singularity is almost always regarded as a brand of slight reproach; and where it is associated with acknowledged merit, serves as an abatement or an allay of excellence, by which weak eyes are reconciled to its lustre, and by which, though kindness is not gained, at least envy is averted.

But let no man be in haste to conclude his own merit so great or conspicuous, as to require or justify singularity; it is as hazardous for a moderate understanding to usurp the prerogatives of genius, as for a common form to play over the airs of uncontested beauty. The pride of men will not patiently endure to see one whose understanding or attainments are but level with their own, break the rules by which they have consented to be bound, or forsake the direction which they submissively follow. All violation of established practice implies in its own nature a rejection of the common opinion, a defiance of common censure, and an appeal from general laws to private judgment: he, therefore, who differs from others without apparent advantage, ought not to be angry if his arrogance is punished with ridicule; if those whose example he superciliously overlooks, point him out to derision, and hoot him back again into the common road.

The pride of singularity is often exerted in little things, where right and wrong are indeterminable, and where, therefore, vanity is without excuse. But there are occasions on which it is noble to dare to stand alone. To be pious among infidels, to be disinterested in a time of general venality, to lead a life of virtue and reason in the midst of sensualists, is a proof of a mind intent on nobler things than the praise or blame of men, of a soul fixed in the contemplation of the highest good, and superior to the tyranny of custom and example.

In moral and religious questions only, a wise man will hold no consultations with fashion, because these duties are constant and immutable, and depend not on the notions of men, but the commands of Heaven; yet even of these, the external mode is to be in some measure regulated by the prevailing taste of the age in which we live; for he is certainly no friend to virtue, who neglects to give it any lawful attraction, or suffers it to deceive the eye or alienate the affections for want of innocent compliance with fashionable decorations.

It is yet remembered of the learned and pious Nelson, that he was remarkably elegant in his manners, and splendid in his dress. He knew, that the eminence of his character drew many eyes upon him; and he was careful not to drive the young or the gay away from religion, by representing it as an enemy to any distinction or enjoyment in which human nature may innocently delight.

In this censure of singularity, I have, therefore, no intention to subject reason or conscience to custom or example. To comply with the degree and practices of mankind, is in some notions the duty of a social being; because by compliance only he can please, and by pleasing only he can become useful: but as the end is not to be lost for the sake of the means, we are not to give up virtue to complaisance; for the end of complaisance is only to gain the kindness of our fellow beings, whose kindness is desirable only as instrumental to happiness, and happiness must be always lost by departure from virtue.

No. 137.] Tuesday, Feb. 26, 1754.

Τ. δ' ἔρεξα Pyth.

What have I been doing?

As man is a being very sparingly furnished with the power of prescience, he can provide for the future only by considering the past; and as futurity is all in which he has any real interest, he ought very diligently to use the only means by which he can be enabled to enjoy it, and frequently to revolve the experiments which he has hitherto made upon life, that he may gain wisdom from his mistakes, and caution from his miscarriages.

Though I do not so exactly conform to the precepts of Pythagoras, as to practise every night this solemn recollection, yet I am not so lost in dissipation as wholly to omit it; nor can I forbear sometimes to inquire of myself, in what employment my life has passed away. Much of my time has sunk into nothing, and left no trace by which it can be distinguished; and of this now I only know, that it was once in my power, and might once have been improved.

Of other parts of life, memory can give some account; at some hours I have been gay, and at others serious; I have sometimes mingled in conversation, and sometimes meditated in solitude; one day has been spent in consulting the ancient sages, and another in writing *Adventurers*.

At the conclusion of any undertaking, it is usual to compute the loss and profit. As I shall soon cease to write *Adventurers*, I could not forbear lately to consider what has been the consequence of my labours; and whether I am to reckon the hours laid out in these compositions, as applied to a good and laudable purpose, or suffered to fume away in useless evaporations.

That I have intended well, I have the attestation of my own heart: but good intentions may be frustrated when they are executed without suitable skill, or directed to an end unattainable in itself.

Some there are, who leave writers very little room for self-congratulation: some who affirm, that books have no influence upon the public, that no age was ever made better by its authors, and that to call upon mankind to correct their manners, is, like Xerxes, to scourge the wind, or shackle the torrent.

This opinion they pretend to support by unfailing experience. The world is full of fraud and corruption, rapine or malignity; interest is the ruling motive of mankind, and every one is endeavouring to increase his own stores of happiness by perpetual accumulation, without reflecting upon the numbers whom his superfluity condemns to want: in this state of things a book of morality is published, in which charity and benevolence are strongly enforced; and it is proved beyond opposition, that men are happy in proportion as they are virtuous, and rich as they are liberal. The book is applauded, and the author is preferred; he imagines his applause

deserved, and receives less pleasure from the acquisition of reward than the consciousness of merit. Let us look again upon mankind; interest is still the ruling motive, and the world is yet full of fraud and corruption, malevolence and rapine.

The difficulty of confuting this assertion, arises merely from its generality and comprehension; to overthrow it by a detail of distinct facts, requires a wider survey of the world than human eyes can take; the progress of reformation is gradual and silent, as the extension of evening shadows; we know that they were short at noon, and are long at sunset, but our senses were not able to discern their increase; we know of every civil nation, that it was once savage, and how was it reclaimed but by precept and admonition?

Mankind are universally corrupt, but corrupt in different degrees; as they are universally ignorant, yet with greater or less irradiations of knowledge. How has knowledge or virtue been increased and preserved in one place beyond another, but, by diligent inculcation and rational enforcement?

Books of morality are daily written, yet its influence is still little in the world; so the ground is annually ploughed, and yet multitudes are in want of bread. But, surely, neither the labours of the moralist nor of the husbandman are vain; let them for a while neglect their tasks, and their usefulness will be known; the wickedness that is now frequent would become universal, the bread that is now scarce would wholly fail.

The power, indeed, of every individual is small, and the consequence of his endeavours imperceptible, in a general prospect of the world. Providence has given no man ability to do much, that something might be left for every man to do. The business of life is carried on by a general co-operation; in which the part of any single man can be no more distinguished, than the effect of a particular drop when the meadows are floated by a summer shower; yet every drop increases the inundation, and every hand adds to the happiness or misery of mankind.

That a writer, however zealous or eloquent, seldom works a visible effect upon cities or nations, will readily be granted. The book which is read most, is read by few, compared with those that read it not; and of those few, the greater part peruse it with dispositions that very little favour their own improvement.

It is difficult to enumerate the several motives which procure to books the honour of perusal: spite, vanity, and curiosity, hope and fear, love and hatred, every passion which incites to any other action, serves at one time or other to stimulate a reader.

Some are fond to take a celebrated volume into their hands, because they hope to distinguish their penetration, by finding faults which have escaped the public; others eagerly buy it in the first bloom of reputation, that they may join the chorus of praise, and not lag, as Falstaff terms it, in "the rearward of the fashion."

Some read for style and some for argument: one has little care about the sentiment, he observes only how it is expressed; another regards not the conclusion, but is diligent to mark how it is inferred: they read for other purposes than the attainment of practical knowledge; and are no more likely to grow wise by an examination of a treatise of moral prudence, than an architect to inflame his devotion by considering attentively the proportions of a temple.

Some read that they may embellish their conversation, or shine in dispute; some that they may not be detected in ignorance, or want the reputation of literary accomplishments: but the most general and prevalent reason of study is the impossibility of finding another amusement equally cheap or constant, equally independent on the hour or the weather. He that wants money to follow the chase of pleasure through her yearly circuit, and is left at home when the gay world rolls to Bath or Tunbridge; he whose gout compels him to hear from his chamber the rattle of chariots transporting happier beings to plays and assemblies, will be forced to seek in books a refuge from himself.

The author is not wholly useless, who provides innocent amusements for minds like these. There are in the present state of things, so many more instigations to evil, than incitements to good, that he who keeps men in a neutral state, may be justly considered as a benefactor to life.

But, perhaps, it seldom happens, that study terminates in mere pastime. Books have always a secret influence on the understanding; we cannot at pleasure obliterate ideas: he that reads books of science, though without any fixed desire of improvement, will grow more knowing; he that entertains himself with moral or religious treatises, will imperceptibly advance in goodness; the ideas which are often offered to the mind, will at last find a lucky moment when it is disposed to receive them.

It is, therefore, urged without reason, as a discouragement to writers, that there are already books sufficient in the world; that all the topics of persuasion have been discussed, and every important question clearly stated and justly decided; and that, therefore, there is no room to hope, that pigmies should conquer where heroes have been defeated, or that the petty copiers of the present time should advance the great work of reformation, which their predecessors were forced to leave unfinished.

Whatever be the present extent of human knowledge, it is not only finite, and therefore in its own nature capable of increase; but so narrow, that almost every understanding may, by a diligent application of its powers, hope to enlarge it. It is, however, not necessary, that a man should forbear to write, till he has discovered some truth unknown before; he may be sufficiently useful, by only diversifying the surface of knowledge, and luring the mind by a new appearance to a second view of those beauties which it had passed over inattentively before. Every writer may find intellects correspondent to his own, to whom his expressions are familiar, and his thoughts congenial; and, perhaps, truth is often more successfully propagated by men of moderate abilities, who, adopting the opinions of others, have no care but to explain them clearly, than by subtle speculatists and curious searchers, who exact from their readers powers equal to their own, and if their fabrics of science be strong, take no care to render them accessible.

For my part, I do not regret the hours which I have laid out in these little compositions.

That the world has grown apparently better, since the publication of the *Adventurer*, I have not observed; but am willing to think, that many have been affected by single sentiments, of which it is their business to renew the impression; that many have caught hints of truth, which it is now their duty to pursue; and that those who have received no improvement, have wanted not opportunity but intention to improve.

No. 138.] SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1754.

Quid pure tranquillet? honos, an dulce lucellum,
An secretum iter, et fallentis semita vitæ? HOR.

Whether the tranquil mind and pure,
Honours or wealth our bliss insure:
Or down through life unknown to stray,
Where lonely leads the silent way. FRANCIS.

HAVING considered the importance of authors to the welfare of the public, I am led by a natural train of thought, to reflect on their condition with regard to themselves; and to inquire what degree of happiness or vexation is annexed to the difficult and laborious employment of providing instruction or entertainment for mankind.

In estimating the pain or pleasure of any particular state, every man, indeed, draws his decisions from his own breast, and cannot with certainty determine whether other minds are affected by the same causes in the same manner. Yet by this criterion we must be content to judge, because no other can be obtained; and, indeed, we have no reason to think it very fallacious, for excepting here and there an anomalous mind, which either does not feel like others, or dissembles its sensibility, we find men unanimously concur in attributing happiness or misery to particular conditions, as they agree in acknowledging the cold of winter, and the heat of autumn.

If we apply to authors themselves for an account of their state, it will appear very little to deserve envy: for they have in all ages been addicted to complaint. The neglect of learning, the ingratitude of the present age, and the absurd preference by which ignorance and dulness often obtain favour and rewards, have been from age to age topics of invective; and few have left their names to posterity, without some appeal to future candour from the perverseness and malice of their own times.

I have, nevertheless, been often inclined to doubt, whether authors, however querulous, are in reality more miserable than their fellow-mortals. The present life is to all a state of infelicity; every man, like an author, believes himself to merit more than he obtains, and solaces the present with the prospect of the future; others, indeed, suffer those disappointments in silence, of which the writer complains, to show how well he has learnt the art of lamentation.

There is at least one gleam of felicity, of which few writers have missed the enjoyment: he whose hopes have so far overpowered his fears, as that he has resolved to stand forth a candidate for fame, seldom fails to amuse himself, before his appearance, with pleasing scenes of affluence or honour; while his fortune is yet under the regulation of fancy, he easily models it to his wish, suffers no thoughts of critics or rivals to intrude upon his mind, but counts over the bounties of patronage, or listens to the voice of praise.

Some there are, that talk very luxuriously of the second period of an author's happiness, and tell of the tumultuous raptures of invention, when the mind riots in imagery, and the choice stands suspended between different sentiments.

These pleasures, I believe, may sometimes be indulged to those, who come to a subject of disquisition with minds full of ideas, and with fancies so vigorous, as easily to excite, select, and arrange them. To write is, indeed, no unpleasing employment, when one sentiment readily produces another, and both ideas and expressions present themselves at the first summons; but such happiness, the greatest genius does not always obtain; and common writers know it only to such a degree, as to credit its possibility. Composition is, for the most part, an effort of slow diligence and steady perseverance, to which the mind is dragged by necessity or resolution, and from which the attention is every moment starting to more delightful amusements.

It frequently happens, that a design which, when considered at a distance, gave flattering hopes of facility, mocks us in the execution with unexpected difficulties; the mind which, while it considered it in the gross, imagined itself amply furnished with materials, finds sometimes an unexpected barrenness and vacuity, and wonders whither all those ideas are vanished, which a little before seemed struggling for emission.

Sometimes many thoughts present themselves but so confused and unconnected, that they are not without difficulty reduced to method or concatenated in a regular and dependent series; the mind falls at once into a labyrinth, of which neither the beginning nor end can be discovered, and toils and struggles without progress or extrication.

It is asserted by Horace, that "if matter be once got together, words will be found with very little difficulty;" a position which, though sufficiently plausible to be inserted in poetical precepts, is by no means strictly and philosophically true. If words were naturally and necessarily consequential to sentiments, it would always follow, that he who has most knowledge must have most eloquence, and that every man would clearly express what he fully understood: yet we find, that to think, and discourse, are often the qualities of different persons: and many books might surely be produced, where just and noble sentiments are degraded and obscured by unsuitable diction.

Words, therefore, as well as things, claim the care of an author. Indeed, of many authors, and those not useless or contemptible, words are almost the only care: many make it their study, not so much to strike out new sentiments, as to recommend those which are already known to more favourable notice by fairer decorations: but every man, whether he copies or invents, whether he delivers his own thoughts or those of another, has often found himself deficient in the power of expression, big with ideas which he could not utter, obliged to ransack his me-

mory for terms adequate to his conceptions, and at last unable to impress upon his reader the image existing in his own mind.

It is one of the common distresses of a writer, to be within a word of a happy period, to want only a single epithet to give amplification its full force, to require only a correspondent term in order to finish a paragraph with elegance, and make one of its members answer to the other: but these deficiences cannot always be supplied: and after a long study and vexation, the passage is turned anew, and the web unwoven that was so nearly finished.

But when thoughts and words are collected and adjusted, and the whole composition at last concluded, it seldom gratifies the author, when he comes coolly and deliberately to review it, with the hopes which had been excited in the fury of the performance: novelty always captivates the mind; as our thoughts rise fresh upon us, we readily believe them just and original, which, when the pleasure of production is over, we find to be mean and common, or borrowed from the works of others, and supplied by memory rather than invention.

But though it should happen that the writer finds no such fault in his performance, he is still to remember, that he looks upon it with partial eyes; and when he considers how much men who could judge of others with great exactness, have often failed of judging of themselves, he will be afraid of deciding too hastily in his own favour, or of allowing himself to contemplate with too much complacence, treasure that has not yet been brought to the test, nor passed the only trial that can stamp its value.

From the public, and only from the public, is he to await a confirmation of his claim, and a final justification of self-esteem; but the public is not easily persuaded to favour an author. If mankind were left to judge for themselves it is reasonable to imagine, that of such writings, at least, as describe the movements of the human passions, and of which every man carries the archetype within him, a just opinion would be formed; but whoever has remarked the fate of books must have found it governed by other causes than general consent arising from general conviction. If a new performance happens not to fall into the hands of some who have courage to tell, and authority to propagate their opinion, it often remains long in obscurity, and perishes unknown and unexamined. A few, a very few, commonly constitute the taste of the time; the judgment which they have once pronounced, some are too lazy to discuss, and some too timorous to contradict; it may however be, I think, observed, that their power is greater to depress than exalt, as mankind are more credulous of censure than of praise.

This perversion of the public judgment is not to be rashly numbered amongst the miseries of an author: since it commonly serves, after miscarriage, to reconcile him to himself. Because the world has sometimes passed an unjust sentence, he readily concludes the sentence unjust by which his performance is condemned; because some have been exalted above their merits by partiality, he is sure to ascribe the success of a rival, not to the merit of his work, but the zeal of his patrons. Upon the whole, as the author seems to share all the common miseries of life, he appears to partake likewise of its lenitives and abatements.

END OF THE ADVENTURER.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE IDLER.

The whole number of papers of which the Idler originally consisted, are contained in this edition, although not all the productions of Dr. Johnson. The authors of 9, 15, 42, 54, and 98, are unknown. Nos. 33, 93, and 96, are by Wharton. No. 67 by Langton. Nos. 76, 79, and 82, by Reynolds.

Of the Essays written by Dr. Johnson, those contained in the Idler were the most popular. The Rambler, though unquestionably the basis of Dr. Johnson's great fame, did not during the author's lifetime meet with the success it deserved. Its style was more dignified, and less miscellaneous than the Spectator. The Spectator pleased and charmed by its variety—it could not fail to do otherwise; for the great wits of Queen Anne's reign were its contributors. The Rambler was more uniform and less amusing, though not less instructive—partaking somewhat of that settled gloom which always seemed to hang over the author's mind. That it should be wanting in novelty is not to be wondered at; for Dr. Johnson stood alone in its composition. Yet it must be confessed, that in this collection the great moral teachings of Dr. Johnson are seldom, if at all, equalled by any thing in the Spectator. His observation upon men and things shows an acute observance of all that was passing around him. He brought in all things, men and their actions, to the test of principle; and made truth and virtue the great levers by which human conduct should be regulated. The essays in the Rambler might, indeed, almost form a body of Ethics.

Dr. Johnson had probably become aware of the objections which had been made to the gravity and seeming pomp of diction which marked the Rambler; and seems to have studied to make the papers which constitute the Idler, to be in keeping with its title. He lays aside his austerity, and assumes a style more easy and less vigorous, losing nothing however of the elegance of composition which is to be found in all his productions. Great depth of thought and profound research into motives and principles, would not well become an Idler. He should look upon men and manners as one desirous of passing his life with as little trouble, as would comport with his general character—which simply is, to know something of the motives and actions by which society is governed, without too laborious investigation of the one, or too severe a criticism upon the other. We accordingly find that while Dr. Johnson still continues his lectures upon human life, he takes hold of the local follies and gayeties of his time, seeks to place common occurrences in a stronger light, and adverts more frequently to the ordinary topics of the day. He thus made the Idler much more popular at the time than the Rambler. He, in fact, may be said to have written the Rambler for posterity—the Idler for his own time and himself.

THE IDLER.

No. 1.] Saturday, April 15, 1758.

Vacui sub umbra
Lusimus. hor.

Those who attempt periodical essays seem to be often stopped in the beginning by the difficulty of finding a proper title. Two writers, since the time of the *Spectator*, have assumed his name, without any pretensions to lawful inheritance; an effort was once made to revive the *Tatler;* and the strange appellations by which other papers have been called, show that the authors were distressed, like the natives of *America*, who come to the *Europeans* to beg a name.

It will be easily believed of the *Idler*, that if his title had required any search, he never would have found it. Every mode of life has its conveniences. The *Idler* who habituates himself to be satisfied with what he can most easily obtain, not only escapes labours which are often fruitless, but sometimes succeeds better than those who despise all that is within their reach, and think every thing more valuable as it is harder to be acquired.

If similitude of manners be a motive to kindness, the *Idler* may flatter himself with universal patronage. There is no single character under which such numbers are comprised. Every man is, or hopes to be, an *Idler*. Even those who seem to differ most from us are hastening to increase our fraternity; as peace is the end of war, so to be idle is the ultimate purpose of the busy.

There is perhaps, no appellation by which a writer can better denote his kindred to the human species. It has been found hard to describe man by an adequate definition. Some philosophers have called him a reasonable animal; but others have considered reason as a quality of which many creatures partake. He has been termed, likewise, a laughing animal; but it is said that some men have never laughed. Perhaps man may be more properly distinguished as an idle animal; for there is no man who is not sometimes idle. It is at least a definition from which none that shall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the *Idler?*

That the definition may be complete, idleness must be not only the general, but the peculiar characteristic of man; and, perhaps, man is the only being that can be properly called idle, that does by others what he might do himself, or sacrifices duty or pleasure to the love of ease.

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which less envy or competition is to be dreaded. The *Idler* has no rivals or enemies. The man of business forgets him; the man of enterprise despises him; and though such as tread the same track of life fall commonly into jealousy and discord, *Idlers* are always found to associate in peace; and he who is most famed for doing nothing, is glad to meet another as idle as himself.

What is to be expected from this paper, whether it will be uniform or various, learned or familiar, serious or gay, political or moral, continued or interrupted, it is hoped that no reader will inquire. That the *Idler* has some scheme cannot be doubted; for to form schemes is the *Idler's* privilege. But though he has many projects in his head, he is now grown sparing of communication, having observed, that his hearers are apt to remember what he forgets himself; that his tardiness of execution exposes him to the encroachments of those who catch a hint and fall to work; and that very specious plans, after long contrivance and pompous displays, have subsided in weariness without a trial, and without miscarriage have been blasted by derision.

Something the *Idler's* character may be supposed to promise. Those that are curious after diminutive history, who watch the revolutions of families, and the rise and fall of characters either male or female, will hope to be gratified by this paper; for the *Idler* is always inquisitive and seldom retentive. He that delights in obloquy and satire, and wishes to see clouds gathering over any reputation that dazzles him with its brightness, will snatch up the *Idler's* essays with a beating heart. The *Idler* is naturally censorious; those who attempt nothing themselves, think every thing easily performed, and consider the unsuccessful always as criminal.

I think it necessary to give notice, that I make no contract nor incur any obligation. If those who depend on the *Idler* for intelligence and entertainment, should suffer the disappointment which commonly follows ill-placed expectations, they are to lay the blame only on themselves.

Yet hope is not wholly to be cast away. The *Idler*, though sluggish, is yet alive and

may sometimes be stimulated to vigour and activity. He may descend into profoundness, or tower into sublimity; for the diligence of an *Idler* is rapid and impetuous, as ponderous bodies forced into velocity move with violence proportionate to their weight.

But these vehement exertions of intellect cannot be frequent, and he will therefore gladly receive help from any correspondent, who shall enable him to please without his own labour. He excludes no style, he prohibits no subject; only let him that writes to the *Idler* remember, that his letters must not be long: no words are to be squandered in declaration of esteem, or confessions of inability; conscious dullness has little right to be prolix, and praise is not so welcome to the *Idler* as quiet.

No. 2.] Saturday, April 22, 1758.

Toto vix quater anno
Membranam. hor.

Many positions are often on the tongue, and seldom in the mind; there are many truths which every human being acknowledges and forgets. It is generally known, that he who expects much will be often disappointed; yet disappointment seldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect than that of producing a moral sentence, or peevish exclamation. He that embarks in the voyage of life, will always wish to advance rather by the impulse of the wind, than the strokes of the oar; and many founder in the passage, while they lie waiting for the gale that is to waft them to their wish.

It will naturally be suspected that the *Idler* has lately suffered some disappointment, and that he does not talk thus gravely for nothing. No man is required to betray his own secrets. I will, however, confess, that I have now been a writer almost a week, and have not yet heard a single word of praise, nor received one hint from any correspondent.

Whence this negligence proceeds I am not able to discover. Many of my predecessors have thought themselves obliged to return their acknowledgments in the second paper, for the kind reception of the first, and in a short time apologies have become necessary to those ingenious gentlemen and ladies whose performances, though in the highest degree elegant and learned, have been unavoidably delayed.

What then will be thought of me, who having experienced no kindness, have no thanks to return; whom no gentleman or lady has yet enabled to give any cause of discontent, and who have, therefore, no opportunity of showing how skilfully I can pacify resentment, extenuate negligence, or palliate rejection?

I have long known that splendour of reputation is not to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore shall not much repine if praise be withheld till it is better deserved. But surely I may be allowed to complain that, in a nation of authors, not one has thought me worthy of notice after so fair an invitation.

At the time when the rage of writing had seized the old and the young, when the cook warbles her lyrics in the kitchen, and the thrasher vociferates his heroics in the barn; when our traders deal out knowledge in bulky volumes, and our girls forsake their samplers to teach kingdoms wisdom, it may seem very unnecessary to draw any more from their proper occupations, by affording new opportunities of literary fame.

I should be, indeed, unwilling to find that, for the sake of corresponding with the *Idler*, the smith's iron had cooled on the anvil, or the spinster's distaff stood unemployed. I solicit only the contributions of those who have already devoted themselves to literature, or, without any determinate intention, wander at large through the expanse of life, and wear out the day in hearing at one place what they utter at another.

Of these the great part are already writers. One has a friend in the country upon whom he exercises his powers; whose passions he raises and depresses; whose understanding he perplexes with paradoxes, or strengthens by argument; whose admiration he courts, whose praises he enjoys; and who serves him instead of a senate or a theatre; As the young soldiers in the Roman camp learned the use of their weapons by fencing against a post in the place of an enemy.

Another has his pockets filled with essays and epigrams which he reads from house to house, to select parties, and which his acquaintances are daily entreating him to withhold no longer from the impatience of the public.

If among these any one is persuaded that, by such preludes of composition, he has qualified himself to appear in the open world, and is yet afraid of those censures which they who have already written, and they who cannot write, are equally ready to fulminate against public pretenders to fame, he may, by transmitting his performances to the *Idler*, make a cheap experiment of his abilities, and enjoy the pleasure of success, without the hazard of miscarriage.

Many advantages not generally known arise from this method of stealing on the public. The standing author of the paper is always the object of critical malignity. Whatever is mean will be imputed to him, and whatever is excellent be ascribed to his assistants. It does not much alter the event, that the author and his correspondents are equally unknown; for the author, whoever he be, is an individual, of whom every reader has some fixed idea, and whom he is, therefore, unwilling to gratify with applause; but the praises given to his correspondents are scattered in the air, none can tell on whom they will light, and therefore none are unwilling to bestow them.

He that is known to contribute to a periodical work, needs no other caution than not to tell what particular pieces are his own; such secrecy is, indeed, very difficult; but if it can be maintained, it is scarcely to be imagined at how small an expense he may grow considerable.

A person of quality, by a single paper, may engross the honour of a volume. Fame is, indeed, dealt with a hand less and less bounteous through the subordinate ranks, till it descends

to the professed author, who will find it very difficult to get more than he deserves; but every man who does not want it, or who needs not value it, may have liberal allowances; and, for five letters in the year sent to the *Idler*, of which perhaps only two are printed, will be promoted to the first rank of writers by those who are weary of the present race of wits, and wish to sink them into obscurity before the lustre of a name not yet known enough to be detested.

No. 3.] Saturday, April 29, 1758.

Otia Vitæ
Solamar cantu. STAT.

It has long been the complaint of those who frequent the theatre, that all the dramatic art has been long exhausted, and that the vicissitudes of fortune, and accidents of life, have been shown in every possible combination, till the first scene informs us of the last, and the play no sooner opens, than every auditor knows how it will conclude. When a conspiracy is formed in a tragedy, we guess by whom it will be detected; when a letter is dropt in a comedy, we can tell by whom it will be found. Nothing is now left for the poet but character and sentiment, which are to make their way as they can without the soft anxiety of suspense, or the enlivening agitation of surprise.

A new paper lies under the same disadvantages as a new play. There is danger lest it be new without novelty.

My earlier predecessors had their choice of vices and follies, and selected such as were most likely to raise merriment or attract attention; they had the whole field of life before them, untrodden and unsurveyed; characters of every kind shot up in their way, and those of the most luxuriant growth, or most conspicuous colours, were naturally cropt by the first sickle. They that follow are forced to peep into neglected corners, to note the casual varieties of the same species, and to recommend themselves by minute industry, and distinctions too subtle for common eyes.

Sometimes it may happen that the haste or negligence of the first inquirers has left enough behind to reward another search; sometimes new objects start up under the eye, and he that is looking for one kind of matter is amply gratified by the discovery of another. But still it must be allowed that as more is taken less can remain; and every truth brought newly to light impoverishes the mine from which succeeding intellects are to dig their treasures.

Many philosophers imagine that the elements themselves may be in time exhausted; that the sun, by shining long, will effuse all its light; and that by the continual waste of aqueous particles, the whole earth will at last become a sandy desert.

I would not advise my readers to disturb themselves by contriving how they shall live without light and water. For the days of universal thirst and perpetual darkness are at a great distance. The ocean and the sun will last our time, and we may leave posterity to shift for themselves.

But if the stores of nature are limited, much more narrow bounds must be set to the modes of life; and mankind may want a moral or amusing paper, many years before they shall be deprived of drink or day-light. This want, which to the busy and inventive may seem easily remediable by some substitute or other, the whole race of *Idlers* will feel with all the sensibility that such torpid animals can suffer.

When I consider the innumerable multitudes that, having no motive of desire, or determination of will, lie freezing in perpetual inactivity, till some external impulse puts them in motion; who awake in the morning vacant of thought, with minds gaping for the intellectual food, which some kind essayist has been accustomed to supply, I am moved by the commiseration with which all human beings ought to behold the distresses of each other, to try some expedients for their relief, and to inquire by what methods the listless may be actuated, and the empty be replenished.

There are said to be pleasures in madness known only to madmen. There are certainly miseries in idleness which the *Idler* only can conceive. These miseries I have often felt and often bewailed. I know by experience how welcome is every avocation that summons the thoughts to a new image; and how much languor and lassitude are relieved by that officiousness which offers a momentary amusement to him who is unable to find it for himself.

It is naturally indifferent to this race of men what entertainment they receive, so they are but entertained. They catch with equal eagerness, at a moral lecture, or the memoirs of a robber; a prediction of the appearance of a comet, or the calculation of the chances of a lottery.

They might therefore easily be pleased if they consulted only their own minds; but those who will not take the trouble to think for themselves, have always somebody that thinks for them; and the difficulty of writing is to please those from whom others learn to be pleased.

Much mischief is done in the world with very little interest or design. He that assumes the character of a critic, and justifies his claim by perpetual censure, and imagines that he is hurting none but the author, and him he considers as a pestilent animal, whom every other being has a right to persecute; little does he think how many harmless men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not understand; or how many honest minds he debars from pleasure, by exciting an artificial fastidiousness, and making them too wise to concur with their own sensations. He who is taught by a critic to dislike that which pleased him in his natural state, has the same reason to complain of his instructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who when he thought himself master of Peru, physicked him to poverty.

If men will struggle against their own advantage they are not to expect that the *Idler* will take much pains upon them; he has him

self to please as well as them, and has long learned, or endeavoured to learn, not to make the pleasure of others too necessary to his own.

No. 4.] Saturday, May 6, 1758.

Πάντας γὰρ φιλέεσκε. HOM.

Charity, or tenderness for the poor, which is now justly considered, by a great part of mankind, as inseparable from piety, and in which almost all the goodness of the present age consists, is, I think, known only to those who enjoy, either immediately or by transmission the light of revelation.

Those ancient nations who have given us the wisest models of government and the brightest examples of patriotism, whose institutions have been transcribed by all succeeding legislatures, and whose history is studied by every candidate for political or military reputation, have left behind them no mention of alms-houses, or hospitals, of places where age might repose, or sickness be relieved.

The Roman emperors, indeed, gave large donations to the citizens and soldiers, but these distributions were always reckoned rather popular than virtuous; nothing more was intended than an ostentation of liberality, nor was any recompense expected, but suffrages and acclamations.

Their beneficence was merely occasional; he that ceased to need the favour of the people, ceased likewise to court it; and therefore, no man thought it either necessary or wise to make any standing provision for the needy, to look forwards to the wants of posterity, or to secure successions of charity, for successions of distress.

Compassion is, by some reasoners, on whom the name of philosophers has been too easily conferred, resolved into an affection merely selfish and involuntary perception of pain at the involuntary sight of a being like ourselves languishing in misery. But this sensation, if ever it be felt at all from the brute instinct of uninstructed nature, will only produce effects desultory and transient; it will never settle into a principle of action or extend relief to calamities unseen, in generations not yet in being.

The devotion of life or fortune to the succour of the poor, is a height of virtue to which humanity has never risen by its own power. The charity of the Mahometans is a precept which their teacher evidently transplanted from the doctrines of Christianity; and the care with which some of the Oriental sects attend, as it is said, to the necessities of the diseased and indigent, may be added to the other arguments which prove Zoroaster to have borrowed his institutions from the law of Moses.

The present age, though not likely to shine hereafter among the most splendid periods of history, has yet given examples of charity, which may be very properly recommended to imitation. The equal distribution of wealth, which long commerce has produced, does not enable any single hand to raise edifices of piety like fortified cities, to appropriate manors to religious uses, or deal out such large and lasting beneficence as was scattered over the land in ancient times, by those who possessed counties or provinces. But no sooner is a new species of misery brought to view, and a design of relieving it professed, than every hand is open to contribute something, every tongue is busied in solicitation, and every art of pleasure is employed for a time in the interest of virtue.

The most apparent and pressing miseries incident to man, have now their peculiar houses of reception and relief; and there are few among us, raised however little above the danger of poverty, who may not justly claim, what is implored by the Mahometans in their most ardent benedictions, the prayers of the poor.

Among those actions which the mind can most securely review with unabated pleasure is that of having contributed to an hospital for the sick. Of some kinds of charity the consequences are dubious; some evils which beneficence has been busy to remedy, are not certainly known to be very grievous to the sufferer or detrimental to the community; but no man can question whether wounds and sickness are not really painful; whether it be not worthy of a good man's care to restore those to ease and usefulnesss, from whose labour infants and women expect their bread, and who, by a casual hurt, or lingering disease, lie pining in want and anguish, burthensome to others, and weary of themselves.

Yet, as the hospitals of the present time subsist only by gifts bestowed at pleasure, without any solid fund of support, there is danger lest the blaze of charity which now burns with so much heat and splendour, should die away for wanting of lasting fuel; lest fashion should suddenly withdraw her smile, and inconstancy transfer the public attention to something which may appear more eligible, because it will be new.

Whatever is left in the hands of chance must be subject to vicissitude; and when any establishment is found to be useful, it ought to be the next care to make it permanent.

But man is a transitory being, and his designs must partake of the imperfections of their author. To confer duration is not always in our power. We must snatch the present moment, and employ it well, without too much solicitude for the future, and content ourselves with reflecting that our part is performed. He that waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wishes, and regret, in the last hour, his useless intentions, and barren zeal.

The most active promoters of the present schemes of charity, cannot be cleared from some instances of misconduct, which may awaken contempt or censure, and hasten that neglect which is likely to come too soon of itself. The open competitions between different hospitals, and the animosity with which their patrons oppose one another, may prejudice weak minds against them all. For it will not be easily believed, that any man can, for good reasons wish to exclude another from doing good. The spirit of charity can only be continued by a re-

conciliation of these ridiculous feuds; and, therefore, instead of contentions who shall be the only benefactors to the needy, let there be no other struggle than who shall be the first.

No. 5.] Saturday, May 13, 1758.

Κάλλος
Αντ' έγχέων απάντων
Αντ' ασπίδων απασῶν ANAC.

Our military operations are at last begun; our troops are marching in all the pomp of war, and a camp is marked out on the Isle of Wight; the heart of every Englishman now swells with confidence, though somewhat softened by generous compassion for the consternationand distresses of our enemies.

This formidable armament, and splendid march, produce different effects upon different minds, according to the boundless diversities or temper, occupation, and habits of thought.

Many a tender maiden considers her lover as already lost, because he cannot reach the camp but by crossing the sea; men of a more political understanding are persuaded that we shall now see, in a few days, the ambassadors of France supplicating for pity. Some are hoping for a bloody battle, because a bloody battle makes a vendible narrative; some are composing songs of victory; some planning arches of triumph; and some are mixing fireworks for the celebration of a peace.

Of all extensive and complicated objects different parts are selected by different eyes; and minds are variously affected, as they vary their attention. The care of the public is now fixed upon our soldiers, who are leaving their native country to wander, none can tell how long, in the pathless deserts of the Isle of Wight. The tender sigh for their sufferings, and the gay drink to their success. I who look, or believe myself to look, with most philosophic eyes on human affairs, must confess, that I saw the troops march with little emotion; my thoughts were fixed upon other scenes, and the tear stole into my eyes, not for those who were going away, but for those who were left behind.

We have no reason to doubt but our troops will proceed with proper caution; there are men among them who can take care of themselves. But how shall the ladies endure without them? By what arts can they, who have long had no joy but from the civilities of a soldier, now amuse their hours, and solace their separation?

Of fifty thousand men, now destined to different stations, if we allow each to have been occasionally necessary only to four women, a short computation will inform us, that two hundred thousand ladies are left to languish in distress; two hundred thousand ladies, who must run to sales and auctions without an attendant; sit at the play without a critic to direct their opinion; buy their fans by their own judgment; dispose shells by their own invention; Walk in the Mall without a gallant; go to the gardens without a protector; and shuffle cards with vain impatience, for want of a fourth to complete the party.

Of these ladies, some, I hope, have lap-dogs, and some monkeys; but they are unsatisfactory companions. Many useful offices are performed by men of scarlet, to which neither dog nor monkey has adequate abilities. A parrot, indeed, is as fine as a colonel, and if he has been much used to good company, is not wholly without conversation; but a parrot, after all is a poor little creature, and has neither sword nor shoulder knot, can neither dance nor play at cards.

Since the soldiers must obey the call of their duty, and go to that side of the kingdom which faces France, I know not why the ladies, who cannot live without them, should not follow them. The prejudices and pride of man have long presumed the sword and spindle made for different hands, and denied the other sex to partake the grandeur of military glory. This notion may be consistently enough received in France, where the salique law excludes females from the throne; but we, who allow them to be sovereigns, may surely suppose them capable to be soldiers.

It were to be wished that some men, whose experience and authority might enforce regard, would propose that our encampments for the present year should comprise an equal number of men and women who should march and fight in mingled bodies. If proper colonels were once appointed, and the drums ordered to beat for female volunteers, our regiments would soon be filled without the reproach or cruelty of an impress.

Of these heroines some might serve on foot, under the denomination of the *Female Buffs*, and some on horseback, with the title of *Lady Hussars*.

What objections can be made to this scheme I have endeavoured maturely to consider, and cannot find that a modern soldier has any duties except that of obedience, which a lady cannot perform. If the hair has lost its powder, a lady has a puff; if a coat be spotted, a lady has a brush. Strength is of less importance since fire-arms have been used; blows of the hand are now seldom exchanged; and what is there to be done in the charge or the retreat beyond the powers of a sprightly maiden?

Our masculine squadrons will not suppose themselves disgraced by their auxiliaries, till they have done something which women could not have done. The troops of Braddock never saw their enemies, and perhaps were defeated by women. If our American general had headed an army of girls, he might still have built a fort and taken it. Had Minorca been defended by a female garrison, it might have been surrendered, as it was, without a breach; and I cannot but think, that seven thousand women might have ventured to look at Rochfort, sack a village, rob a vineyard, and return in safety.

No. 6.] Saturday, May 20, 1758.

Ταμεῖον ἀρετῆς γενναῖα γυνή. GR. PRO.

The lady who had undertaken to ride on one horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours, has

completed her journey in little more than two thirds of the time stipulated, and was conducted through the last mile with triumphal honours. Acclamation shouted before her, and all the flowers of the spring were scattered in her way.

Every heart ought to rejoice when true merit is distinguished with public notice. I am far from wishing either to the Amazon or her horse any diminution of happiness or fame, and cannot but lament that they were not more amply and suitably rewarded.

There once a time when wreaths of bays or oak were considered as recompenses equal to the most wearisome labours and terrific dangers, and when the miseries of long marches and stormy seas were at once driven from the remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in ancient times, she might, perhaps, have been delighted with the simplicity of ancient gratitude; or, if any thing was wanting to full satisfaction, she might have supplied the deficiency with the hope of deification, and anticipated the altars that would be raised, and the vows that would be made, by future candidates for equestrian glory, to the patroness of the race, and the goddess of the stable.

But fate reserved her for a more enlightened age, which has discovered leaves and flowers to be transitory things; which considers profit as the end of honour; and rates the event of every undertaking only by the money that is gained or lost. In these days, to strew the road with daises and lilies is to mock merit, and delude hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, nor the mercer measure out his silks for vegetable coin. A primrose, though picked up under the feet of the most renowned courser, will neither be received as a stake at cards, nor procure a seat at an opera, nor buy candles for a rout, nor lace for a livery. And though there are many virtuosos, whose sole ambition is to possess something which can be found in no other hand, yet some are more accustomed to store their cabinets by theft than purchase, and none of them would either steal or buy one of the flowers of gratulation till he knows that all the rest are totally destroyed.

Little, therefore, did it avail this wonderful lady to be received, however joyfully, with such obsolete and barren ceremonies of praise. Had the way been covered with guineas, though but for the tenth part of the last mile, she would have considered her skill and diligence as not wholly lost; and might have rejoiced in the speed and perseverance which had left her such superfluity of time, that she could at leisure gather her reward without the danger of Atalanta's miscarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, have been paved with gold but at a large expense, and we are at present engaged in a war, which demands and enforces frugality. But common rules are made only for common life, and some deviation from general policy may be allowed in favour of a lady that rode a thousand miles in a thousand hours.

Since the spirit of antiquity so much prevails amongst us, that even on this great occasion we have given flowers instead of money, let us at least complete our imitation of the ancients, and endeavour to transmit to posterity the memory of that virtue which we consider as superior to pecuniary recompense. Let an equestrian statue of this heroine be erected, near the starting-post on the heath of Newmarket, to fill kindred souls with emulation, and tell the grand-daughters of our grand-daughters what an English maiden has once performed.

As events, however illustrious, are soon obscured if they are intrusted to tradition, I think it necessary that the pedestal should be inscribed with a concise account of this great performance. The composition of this narrative ought not to be committed rashly to improper hands. If the rhetoricians of Newmarket, who may be supposed likely to conceive in its full strength the dignity of the subject, should undertake to express it, there is danger lest they admit some phrases which, though well understood at present, may be ambiguous in another century. If posterity should read on a public monument, that *the lady carried her horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours*, they may think that the statue and inscription are at variance, because one will represent the horse as carrying his lady, and the other tell that the lady carried her horse.

Some doubts likewise may be raised by speculatists, and some controversies be agitated among historians, concerning the motive as well as the manner of the action. As it will be known that this wonder was performed in a time of war, some will suppose that the lady was frightened by invaders, and fled to preserve her life or her chastity: others will conjecture that she was thus honoured for some intelligence carried of the enemy's designs: some will think that she brought news of a victory: others that she was commissioned to tell of a conspiracy: and some will congratulate themselves on their acuter penetration, and find, that all these notions of patriotism and public spirit are improbable and chimerical; they will confidently tell, that she only ran away from her guardians, and the true causes of her speed were, fear and love.

Let it therefore be carefully mentioned, that by this performance *she won her wager*; and, lest this should, by any change of manners, seem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added, that at this time the original motives of human actions had lost their influence; that the love of praise was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wish of an Englishman was, *to win his wager*.

No. 7.] Saturday, May 27, 1758.

One of the principal amusements of the *Idler* is, to read the works of those minute historians the writers of news, who, though contemptuously overlooked by the composers of bulky volumes, are yet necessary in a nation where much wealth produces much leisure, and one part of the people has nothing to do but to observe the lives and fortunes of the other.

To us who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence, and are supplied from day to day with materials for conversation, it is difficult to conceive how man can subsist without a newspaper, or to what entertainment companies can assemble in those wide regions of the earth that have neither Chronicles nor Magazines, neither Gazettes nor Advertisers, neither Journals nor Evening Posts.

There are never great numbers in any nation, whose reason or invention can find employment for their tongues, who can raise a pleasing discourse from their own stock of sentiments and images; and those few who have qualified themselves by speculation for general disquisitions are soon left without an audience. The common talk of men must relate to facts in which the talkers have, or think they have an interest; and where such facts cannot be known, the pleasures of society will be merely sensual. Thus the natives of the Mahometan empires, who approach most nearly to European civility, have no higher pleasure at their convivial assemblies than to hear a piper, or gaze upon a tumbler; and no company can keep together longer than they are diverted by sounds or shows.

All foreigners remark, that the knowledge of the common people of England is greater than that of any other vulgar. This superiority we undoubtedly owe to the rivulets of intelligence which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.

This universal diffusion of instruction is, perhaps, not wholly without its inconveniences; it certainly fills the nation with superficial disputants; enables those to talk who were born to work; and affords information sufficient to elate vanity, and stiffen obstinacy, but too little to enlarge the mind into complete skill for full comprehension.

Whatever is found to gratify the public will be multiplied, by the emulation of venders, beyond necessity or use. This plenty, indeed, produces cheapnes, but cheapness always ends in negligence and depravation.

The compilation of newspapers often committed to narrow and mercenary minds, not qualified for the task of delighting or instructing; who are content to fill their paper, with whatever matter, without industry to gather, or discernment to select.

Thus journals are daily multiplied without increase of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. These repetitions, indeed, waste time, but they do not shorten it. The most eager peruser of news is tired before he has completed his labour; and many a man, who enters the coffee-house in his night-gown and slippers, is called away to his shop, or his dinner, before he has well considered the state of Europe.

It is discovered by Reaumur, that spiders might make silk, if they could be persuaded to live in peace together. The writers of news, if they could be confederated, might give more pleasure to the public. The morning and evening authors might divide an event between them; a single action, and that not of much importance, might be gradually discovered, so as to vary a whole week with joy, anxiety, and conjecture.

We know that a French ship of war was lately taken by a ship of England; but this event was suffered to burst upon us all at once, and then what we knew already was echoed from day to day, and from week to week.

Let us suppose these spiders of literature to spin together, and inquire to what an extensive web such another event might be regularly drawn, and how six morning and six evening writers might agree to retail their articles.

On Monday morning the captain of a ship might arrive, who left the Friseur of France, and the Bull-dog, captain Grim, in sight of one another, so that an engagement seemed unavoidable.

Monday evening. A sound of cannon was heard off Cape Finisterre, supposed to be those of the Bull-dog and Friseur.

Tuesday morning. It was this morning reported, that the Bull-dog engaged the Friseur, yard-arm and yard-arm, three glasses and a half, but was obliged to sheer off for want of powder. It is hoped that inquiry will be made into this affair in a proper place.

Tuesday evening. The account of the engagement between the Bull-dog and Friseur was premature.

Wednesday morning. Another express is arrived, which brings news, that the Friseur had lost all her masts, and three hundred of her men, in the late engagement; and that captain Grim is come into harbour much shattered.

Wednesday evening. We hear that the brave captain Grim, having expended his powder, proposed to enter the Friseur, sword in hand; but that his lieutenant, the nephew of a certain nobleman, remonstrated against it.

Thursday morning. We wait impatiently for a full account of the late engagement between the Bull-dog and Friseur.

Thursday evening. It is said the order of the Bath will be sent to captain Grim.

Friday morning. A certain Lord of the Admiralty has been heard to say of a certain captain, that if he had done his duty, a certain French ship might have been taken. It was not thus that merit was rewarded in the days of Cromwell.

Friday evening. There is certain information at the Admiralty, that the Friseur is taken, after a resistance of two hours.

Saturday morning. A letter from one of the gunners of the Bull-dog, mentions the taking of the Friseur, and attributes their success wholly to the bravery and resolution of captain Grim, who never owed any of his advancement to borough-jobbers, or any other corrupters of the people.

Saturday evening. Captain Grim arrived at the Admiralty, with an account that he engaged the Friseur, a ship of equal force with his own, off Cape Finisterre, and took her, after an obstinate resistance, having killed one hundred and fifty of the French, with the loss of ninety-five of his own men.

No. 8.] Saturday, June 3, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

In the time of public danger, it is every man's duty to withdraw his thoughts in some measure from his private interest, and employ part of his time for the general welfare. National conduct ought to be the result of national wisdom, a plan formed by mature consideration and diligent selection out of all the schemes which may be offered, and all the information which can be procured.

In a battle, every man should fight as if he was the single champion; in preparations for war, every man should think, as if the last event depended on his counsel. None can tell what discoveries are within his reach, or how much he may contribute to the public safety.

Full of these considerations, I have carefully reviewed the process of the war, and find, what every other man has found, that we have hitherto added nothing to our military reputation: that at one time we have been beaten by enemies whom we did not see; and, at another, have avoided the sight of enemies lest we should be beaten.

Whether our troops are defective in discipline or in courage, is not very useful to inquire; they evidently want something necessary to success; and he that shall supply that want will deserve well of his country.

To learn of an enemy has always been accounted politic and honourable; and, therefore, I hope it will raise no prejudice against my project, to confess that I borrowed it from a Frenchman.

When the Isle of Rhodes was, many centuries ago, in the hands of that military order, now called the Knights of Malta, it was ravaged by a dragon, who inhabited a den under a rock, from which he issued forth when he was hungry or wanton, and without fear or mercy devoured men and beasts as they came in his way. Many councils were held, and many devices offered, for his destruction; but as his back was armed with impenetrable scales, none would venture to attack him. At last Dudon, a French knight, undertook the deliverance of the island. From some place of security he took a view of the dragon, or, as a modern soldier would say, *reconnoitered* him, and observed that his belly was naked and vulnerable. He then returned home to take his *arrangements*; and, by a very exact imitation of nature, made a dragon of pasteboard, in the belly of which he put beef and mutton, and accustomed two sturdy mastiffs to feed themselves by tearing their way to the concealed flesh. When his dogs were well practised in this method of plunder, he marched out with them at his heels, and showed them the dragon; they rushed upon him in quest of their dinner; Dudon battered his skull, while they lacerated his belly; and neither his sting nor claws were able to defend him.

Something like this might be practised in our present state. Let a fortification be raised on Salisbury-Plain, resembling Brest, or Toulon, or Paris itself, with all the usual preparation for defence: let the inclosure be filled with beef and ale; let the soldiers from some proper eminence, see shirts waving upon lines, and here and there a plump landlady hurrying about with pots in their hands. When they are sufficiently animated to advance, lead them in exact order, with fife and drum, to that side whence the wind blows, till they come within the scent of roast meat and tobacco.—Contrive that they may approach the place fasting, about half an hour after dinner-time, assure them that there is no danger, and command an attack.

If nobody within either moves or speaks, it is not unlikely that they may carry the place by storm; but if a panic should seize them, it will be proper to defer the enterprise to a more hungry hour. When they have entered, let them fill their bellies and return to the camp.

On the next day let the same place be shown them again, but with some additions of strength or terror. I cannot pretend to inform our generals through what gradations of danger they should train their men to fortitude. They best know what the soldiers and what themselves can bear. It will be proper that the war should every day vary its appearance. Sometimes, as they mount the rampart, a cook may throw fat upon the fire, to accustom them to a sudden blaze; and sometimes by the clatter of empty pots, they may be inured to formidable noises. But let it never be forgotten, that victory must repose with a full belly.

In time it will be proper to bring our French prisoners from the coast, and place them upon the walls in martial order. At their first appearance their hands must be tied, but they may be allowed to grin. In a month the may guard the place with their hands loosed, provided that on pain of death they be forbidden to strike.

By this method our army will soon be brought to look an enemy in the face. But it has been lately observed, that fear is received by the ear as well as the eyes; and the Indian war-cry is represented as too dreadful to be endured; as a sound that will force the bravest veteran to drop his weapon, and desert his rank; that will deafen his ear and chill his breast; that will neither suffer him to hear orders or to feel shame, or retain any sensibility but the dread of death.

That the savage clamours of naked barbarians should thus terrify troops disciplined to war, and ranged in array with arms in their hands, is surely strange. But this is no time to reason. I am of opinion, that by a proper mixture of asses, bulls, turkeys, geese, and tragedians, a noise might be procured equally horrid with the war-cry. When our men have been encouraged by frequent victories, nothing will remain but to qualify them for extreme danger, by a sudden concert of terrific vociferation. When they have endured this last trial, let them be led to action, as men who are no longer to be frightened; as men who can bear at once the grimaces of the Gauls, and the howl of the Americans.

No. 9.] Saturday, June 10, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have read you; that is a favour few authors can boast of having received from me besides yourself. My intention in telling you of it is to inform you, that you have both pleased and angered me. Never did writer appear so delightful to me as you did when you adopted the name of the *Idler*. But what a falling-off was there when your first production was brought to light! A natural, irresistible attachment to that favourite passion, *idling*, had led me to hope for indulgence from the *Idler*, but I find him a stranger to the title.

What rules has he proposed totally to unbrace the slackened nerve; to shade the heavy eye of inattention; to give the smooth feature and the uncontracted muscle; or procure insensibility to the whole animal composition?

These were some of the placid blessings I promised myself the enjoyment of, when I committed violence upon myself by mustering up all my strength to set about reading you; but I am disappointed in them all, and the stroke of eleven in the morning is still as terrible to me as before, and I find putting on my clothes still as painful and laborious. Oh that our climate would permit that original nakedness which the thrice happy Indians to this day enjoy! How many unsolicitous hours should I bask away, warmed in bed by the sun's glorious beams, could I, like them, tumble from thence in a moment, when necessity obliges me to endure the torment of getting upon my legs!

But wherefore do I talk to you upon subjects of this delicate nature? you, who seem ignorant of the inexpressible charms of the elbow-chair, attended with a soft stool for the elevation of the feet! Thus, vacant of thought, do I indulge the live-long day.

You may define happiness as you please; I embrace that opinion which makes it consist in the absence of pain. To reflect is pain; to stir is pain; therefore I never reflect or stir but when I cannot help it. Perhaps you will call my scheme of life indolence, and therefore think the *Idler* excused from taking any notice of me: but I have always looked upon indolence and idleness as the same; and so desire you will now and then, while you profess yourself of our fraternity, take some notice of me, and others in my situation, who think they have a right to your assistance; or relinquish the name.

You may publish, burn, or destroy this, just as you are in the humour; it is ten to one but I forget that I wrote it before it reaches you. I believe you may find a motto for it in Horace, but I cannot reach him without getting out of my chair; that is a sufficient reason for my not affixing any.—And being obliged to sit upright to ring the bell for my servant to convey this to the penny-post, if I slip the opportunity of his being now in the room, makes be break off abruptly

This correspondent, whoever he be, is not to be dismissed without some tokens of regard. There is no mark more certain of a genuine *Idler* than uneasiness without molestation, and complaint without a grievance.

Yet my gratitude to the contributor of half a paper shall not wholly overpower my sincerity. I must inform you, that, with all his pretensions, he that calls for directious to be idle, is yet but in the rudiments of idleness, and has attained neither the practice nor theory of wasting life. The true nature of idleness he will know in time, by continuing to be idle. Virgil tells us of an impetuous and rapid being, that acquires strength by motion. The *Idler* acquires weight by lying still.

The *vis inertiæ*, the quality of resisting all external impulse, is hourly increasing; the restless and troublesome faculties of attention and distinction, reflection on the the past, and solitude for the future, by a long indulgence of idleness, will, like tapers in unelastic air, be gradually extinguished; and the officious lover, the vigilant soldier, the busy trader, may, by a judicious composure of his mind, sink into a state approaching to that of brute matter; in which he shall retain the consciousness of his own existence, only by an obtuse langour and drowsy discontent.

This is the lowest stage to which the favourites of idleness can descend: these regions of undelighted quiet can be entered by few.—Of those that are prepared to sink down into their shade, some are roused into action by avarice or ambition, some are awakened by the voice of fame, some allured by the smile of beauty, and many withheld by the importunities of want. Of all the enemies of idleness, want is the most formidable. Fame is soon found to be a sound, and love a dream; avarice and ambition may be justly suspected of privy confederacies with idleness; for when they have for a while protected their votaries, they often deliver them up to end their lives under her dominion. Want always struggles against idleness, but Want her herself is often overcome; and every hour shows the careful observer those who had rather live in ease than in plenty.

So wide is the region of Idleness, and so powerful her influence. But she does not immediately confer all her gifts. My correspondent, who seems, with all his errors, worthy of advice, must be told, that, he is calling too hastily for the last effusion of total insensibility. Whatever he may have been taught by unskilful Idlers to believe, labour is necessary in his initiation to idleness. He that never labours may know the pains of idleness, but not the pleasure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himself to insensibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of idleness, and shorten those of labour, till at last he will lie down to rest, and no longer disturb the world or himself by bustle or competition.

Thus I have endeavoured to give him that information which, perhaps, after all, he did not want: for a true *Idler* often calls for that which he knows is never to be had, and asks ques-

tions which he does not desire ever to be answered.

No. 10.] Saturday, June 17, 1758.

Credulity, or confidence of opinion too great for the evidence from which opinion is derived, we find to be a general weakness imputed by every sect and party to all others; and, indeed, by every man to every other man.

Of all kinds of credulity, the most obstinate and wonderful is that of political zealots; of men, who being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the parties that divide a state, resign the use of their own eyes and ears, and resolve to believe nothing that does not favour those whom they profess to follow.

The bigot of philosophy is seduced by authorities which he has not always opportunities to examine, is entangled in systems by which truth and falsehood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on subjects which nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The Cartesian, who denies that his horse feels the spur, or that the hare is afraid when the hounds approach her; the disciple of Malbranche, who maintains that the man was not hurt by the bullet, which, according to vulgar apprehension, swept away his legs; the follower of Berkely, who, while he sits writing at his table, declares that he has neither table, paper, nor fingers; have all the honour at least of being deceived by fallacies not easily detected, and may plead that they did not forsake truth, but for appearances which they were not able to distinguish from it.

But the man who engages in a party has seldom to do with any thing remote or abstruse. The present state of things is before his eyes; and, if he cannot be satisfied without retrospection, yet he seldom extends his views beyond the historical events of the last century. All the knowledge that he can want is within his attainment, and most of the arguments which he can hear are within his capacity.

Yet so it is that an *Idler* meets every hour of his life with men who have different opinions upon every thing past, present, and future; who deny the most notorious facts, contradict the most cogent truths, and persist in asserting to-day what they asserted yesterday, in defiance of evidence, and contempt of confutation.

Two of my companions, who are grown old in idleness, are Tom Tempest and Jack Sneaker. Both of them consider themselves as neglected by their parties, and therefore entitled to credit; for why should they favour ingratitude? They are both men of integrity, where no factious interest is to be promoted; and both lovers of truth, when they are not heated with political debate.

Tom Tempest is a steady friend to the house of Stuart. He can recount the prodigies that have appeared in the sky, and the calamities that have afflicted the nation every year from the Revolution; and is of opinion, that, if the exiled family had continued to reign, there would have neither been worms in our ships, nor caterpillars in our trees. He wonders that the nation was not awakened by the hard frost to a revocation of the true king, and is hourly afraid that the whole island will be lost in the sea. He believes that king William burnt Whitehall that he might steal the furniture; and that Tillotson died an atheist. Of queen Anne he speaks with more tenderness, owns that she meant well, and can tell by whom and why she was poisoned. In the succeeding reigns all has been corruption, malice, and design. He believes that nothing ill has ever happened for these forty years by chance or error; he holds that the battle of Dittingen was won by mistake, and that of Fontenoy lost by contract; that the Victory was sunk by a private order; that Cornhill was fired by emissaries from the council; and the arch of Westminster-bridge was so contrived as to sink, on purpose that the nation might be put to charge. He considers the new road to Islington as an encroachment on liberty, and often asserts that *broad wheel* will be the ruin of England.

Tom is generally vehement and noisy, but nevertheless has some secrets which he always communicates in a whisper. Many and many a time has Tom told me, in a corner, that our miseries were almost at an end, and that we should see, in a month, another monarch on the throne; the time elapses without a revolution; Tom meets me again with new intelligence, the whole scheme is now settled, and we shall see great events in another month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the present establishment; he has known those who saw the bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a warming-pan. He often rejoices that the nation was not enslaved by the Irish.—He believes that king William never lost a battle, and that if he had lived one year longer he would have conquered France. He holds that Charles the First was a Papist. He allows there were some good men in the reign of queen Anne, but the peace of Utrecht brought a blast upon the nation, and has been the cause of all the evil that we have suffered to the present hour. He believes that the scheme of the South Sea was well intended, but that it miscarried by the influence of France. He considers a standing army as the bulwark of liberty; thinks us secured from corruption by septennial parliaments; relates how we are enriched and strengthened by the electoral dominions, and declares that the public debt is a blessing to the nation.

Yet, amidst all this prosperity, poor Jack is hourly disturbed by the dread of Popery.—He wonders that some stricter laws are not made against Papists, and is sometimes afraid that they are busy with French gold among the bishops and Judges.

He cannot believe that the Nonjurors are so quiet for nothing; they must certainly be forming some plot for the establishment of popery; he does not think the present oath sufficiently binding, and wishes that some better security could be found for the succession of Hanover. He is zealous for the naturalization of foreign Protestants, and rejoiced at the admission of the Jews to the English privileges

because he thought a Jew would never be a Papist.

No. 11.] Saturday, June 24, 1758.

It is uncommonly observed, that when two Englishman meet, their first talk is of the weather; they are in haste to tell each other, what each must already know, that it is hot or cold, bright or cloudy, windy or calm.

There are, among the numerous lovers of subtilties and paradoxes, some who derive the civil institutions of every country from its climate, who impute freedom and slavery to the temperature, of the air, can fix the meridian of vice and virtue, and tell at what degree of latitude we are to expect courage or timidity, knowledge or ignorance.

From these dreams of idle speculation, a slight survey of life, and a little knowledge of history, is sufficient to awaken any inquirer, whose ambition of distinction has not overpowered his love of truth. Forms of government are seldom the result of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular assemblies, or in conquered countries by despotic authority. Laws are often occasional, often capricious, made always by a few, and sometimes by a single voice. Nations have changed their characters; slavery is now nowhere more patiently endured, than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty.

But national customs can arise only from general agreement; they are not imposed, but chosen, and are continued only by the continuance of their cause. An Englishman's notice of the weather, is the natural consequence of changeable skies and uncertain seasons. In many parts of the world, wet weather and dry are regularly expected at certain periods; but in our island every man goes to sleep, unable to guess whether he shall behold in the morning a bright or cloudy atmosphere, whether his rest shall be lulled by a shower, or broken by a tempest. We therefore rejoice mutually at good weather, as at an escape from something that we feared; and mutually complain of bad, as of the loss of something that we hoped. Such is the reason of our practice; and who shall treat it with contempt? Surely not the attendant on a court, whose business is to watch the looks of a being weak and foolish as himself, and whose vanity is, to recount the names of men who might drop into nothing, and leave no vacuity; nor the proprietor of funds, who stops his acquaintance in the street to tell him of the loss of half-a-crown; nor the inquirer after news, who fills his head with foreign events; and talks of skirmishes and sieges, of which no consequence will ever reach his hearers or himself. The weather is a nobler and more interesting subject; it is the present state of the skies and of the earth, on which plenty and famine are suspended, on which millions depend for the necessaries of life.

The weather is frequently mentioned for another reason, less honourable to my dear countrymen. Our dispositions too frequently change with the colour of the sky; and when we find ourselves cheerful and good-natured, we naturally pay our acknowledgements to the powers of sunshine; or, if we sink into dulness and peevishness, look round the horizon for an excuse, and charge our discontent upon an easterly wind or a cloudy day.

Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reason, than to resign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependence on the weather and the wind, for the only blessings which nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence. To look up to the sky for the nutriment of our bodies, is the condition of nature; to call upon the sun for peace and gayety, to deprecate the clouds lest sorrow should overwhelm us, is the cowardice of idleness, and idolatry of folly.

Yet, even in this age of inquiry and knowledge, when superstition is driven away, and omens and prodigies have lost their terrors, we find this folly countenanced by frequent examples. Those that laugh at the portentous glare of a comet, and hear a crow with equal tranquillity from the right or left, will yet talk of times and situations proper for intellectual performances, will imagine the fancy exalted by vernal breezes, and the reason invigorated by a bright calm.

If men who have given up themselves to fanciful credulity, would confine their conceits in their own minds, they might regulate their lives by the barometer, with inconvenience only to themselves; but to fill the world with accounts of intellects subject to ebb and flow, of one genius that awakened in the spring, and another that ripened in the autumn, of one mind expanded in the summer, and of another concentrated in the winter, is no less dangerous than to tell children of bugbears and goblins. Fear will find every house haunted; and idleness will wait for ever for the moment of illumination.

This distinction of seasons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance every day is bright, and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that shall resolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will soon make himself superior to the seasons, and may set at defiance the morning mist, and the evening damp, the blasts of the east, and the clouds of the south.

It was the boast of the Stoic philosophy, to make man unshaken by calamity, and unelated by success; incorruptible by pleasure, and invulnerable by pain; these are heights of wisdom which none ever attained, and to which few can aspire; but there are lower degrees of constancy necessary to common virtue; and every man, however he may distrust himself in the extremes of good or evil, might at least struggle against the tyranny of the climate, and refuse to enslave his virtue or his reason to the most variable of all variations, the changes of the weather.

No. 12.] Saturday, July 1, 1758.

That every man is important in his own eyes, is a position of which we all, either voluntarily

or unwarily, at least once an hour confess the truth, and it will unavoidably follow, that every man believes himself important to the public.

The right which this importance gives us to general notice and visible distinction, is one of those disputable privileges which we have not always courage to assert, and which we therefore suffer to lie dormant, till some elation of mind, or vicissitude of fortune, incites us to declare our pretensions, and enforce our demands. And hopeless as the claim of vulgar characters may seem to the supercilious and severe, there are few who do not at one time or other endeavour to step forward beyond their rank, who do not make some struggles for fame, and show that they think all other conveniences and delights imperfectly enjoyed without a name.

To get a name can happen but to few. A name, even in the most commercial nation, is one of the few things which cannot be bought. It is the free gift of mankind, which must be deserved before it will be granted, and is at last unwillingly bestowed. But this unwillingness only increases desire in him who believes his merit sufficient to overcome it.

There is a particular period of life in which this fondness for a name seems principally to predominate in both sexes. Scarce any couple comes together but the nuptials are declared in the newspapers with encomiums on each party. Many an eye, ranging over the page with eager curiosity in quest of statesmen and heroes, is stopped by a marriage celebrated between Mr. Buckram, an eminent salesman in Threadneedle-street, and Miss Dolly Juniper, the only daughter of an eminent distiller of the parish of St. Giles's in the Fields, a young lady adorned with every accomplishment that can give happiness to the married state. Or we are told amidst our impatience for the event of a battle, that on a certain day Mr. Winker, a tide-waiter at Yarmouth, was married to Mrs. Cackle, a widow lady of great accomplishments; and that as soon as the ceremony was performed they set out in a post chaise for Yarmouth.

Many are the inquiries which such intelligence must undoubtedly raise, but nothing in the world is lasting. When the reader has contemplated with envy, or with gladness, the felicity of Mr. Buckram and Mr. Winker, and ransacked his memory for the names of Juniper and Cackle, his attention is diverted to other thoughts, by finding that Mirza will not cover this season; or that a spaniel has been lost or stolen, that answers to the name of Ranger.

Whence it arises that on the day of marriage all agree to call thus openly for honours, I am not able to discover. Some, perhaps, think it kind by a public declaration, to put an end to the hopes of rivalry and the fears of jealousy, to let parents know that they may set their daughters at liberty whom they have locked up for fear of of the bridegroom, or to dismiss to their counters and their offices the amorous youths that had been used to hover round the dwelling of the bride.

These connubial praises may have another cause. It may be the intention of the husband and wife to dignify themselves in the eyes of each other, and, according to their different tempers or expectations, to win affection, or enforce respect.

It was said of the family of Lucas that it was *noble*, for *all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters were virtuous.* What would a stranger say of the English nation, in which, on the day of marriage, all the men are *eminent* and all the women *beautiful, accomplished,* and *rich?*

How long the wife will be persuaded of the eminence of her husband, or the husband continue to believe that his wife has the qualities required to make marriage happy, may reasonably be questioned. I am afraid that much time seldom passes before each is convinced that praises are fallacious, and, particularly those praises which we confer upon ourselves

I should, therefore, think that this custom might be omitted without any loss to the community; and that the sons and daughters of lanes and alleys might go hereafter to the next church, with no witnesses of their worth or happiness but their parents and their friends; but if they cannot be happy on their bridal day without some gratification of their vanity, I hope they will be willing to encourage a friend of mine who proposes to devote his powers to their service.

Mr. Settle, a man whose *eminence* was once allowed by the *eminent*, and whose *accomplishments* were confessed by the *accomplished*, in the latter part of a long life supported himself by an uncommon expedient. He had a standing elegy and epithalamium, of which only the first and last leaves were varied occasionally, and the intermediate pages were, by general terms, left applicable alike to every character When any marriage became known, Settle ran to the bridegroom with his epithalamium; and when he heard of any death, ran to the heir with his elegy.

Who can think himself disgraced by a trade that was practised so long by the rival of Dryden, by the poet whose Empress of Morocco was played before princes by ladies of the court?

My friend proposes to open an office in the Fleet for matrimonial panegyries, and will accommodate all with praise who think their own powers of expression inadequate to their merit. He will sell any man or woman the virtue or qualification which is most fashionable or most desired; but desires his customers to remember, that he sets beauty at the highest price, and riches at the next; and if he be well paid, throws in virtue for nothing.

No. 13.] Saturday, July 8, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Dear Mr. Idler,

Though few men of prudence are much inclined to interpose in disputes between man and wife, who commonly make peace at the expense of the arbitrator, yet I will venture to lay before you a controversy, by which the quiet of my house has been long disturbed,

and which, unless you can decide it, is likely to produce lasting evils, and embitter those hours which nature seems to have appropriated to tenderness and repose.

I married a wife with no great fortune, but of a family remarkable for domestic prudence, and elegant frugality. I lived with her at ease, if not with happiness, and seldom had any reason of complaint. The house was always clean, the servants very active and regular, dinner was on the table every day at the same minute, and the ladies of the neighbourhood were frightened when I invited their husbands, lest their own economy should be less esteemed.

During this gentle lapse of life my dear brought me three daughters. I wished for a son, to continue the family; but my wife often tells me, that boys are dirty things, and, are always troublesome in a house; and declares that she has hated the sight of them ever since she saw lady Fondle's eldest son ride over a carpet with his hobby-horse all mire.

I did not much attend to her opinion, but knew that girls could not be made boys; and therefore composed myself to bear what I could not remedy, and resolved to bestow that care on my daughters to which only the sons are commonly thought entitled.

But my wife's notions of education differ widely from mine. She is an irreconcileable enemy to idleness, and considers every state of life as idleness, in which the hands are not employed, or some art acquired, by which she thinks money may be got or saved.

In pursuance of this principle, she calls up her daughters at a certain hour, and appoints them a task of needlework to be performed before breakfast. They are confined in a garret, which has its window in the roof, both because the work is best done at a skylight, and because children are apt to lose time by looking about them.

They bring down their work to breakfast, and as they deserve are commended or reproved; they are then sent up with a new task till dinner; if no company is expected, their mother sits with them the whole afternoon, to direct their operations, and to draw patterns, and is sometimes denied to her nearest relations, when she is engaged in teaching them a new stitch.

By this continual exercise of their diligence, she has obtained a very considerable number of laborious performances. We have twice as many fire-screens as chimneys, and three flourished quilts for every bed. Half the rooms are adorned with a kind of *sutile pictures*, which imitate tapestry. But all their work is not set out to show; she has boxes filled with knit garters and braided shoes. She has twenty covers for side-saddles embroidered with silver flowers, and has curtains wrought with gold in various figures, which she resolves some time or other to hang up. All these she displays to her company whenever she is elate with merit, and eager for praise; and amidst the the praises which her friends and herself bestow upon her merit, she never fails to turn to me, and ask what all these would cost, if I had been to buy them.

I sometimes venture to tell her that many of the ornaments are superfluous; that what is done with so much labour might have been supplied by a very easy purchase; that the work is not always worth the materials; and that I know not why the children should be persecuted with useless tasks, or obliged to make shoes that are never worn. She answers with a look of contempt, that men never care how money goes, and proceeds to tell of a dozen new chairs for which she is contriving covers, and of a couch which she intends to stand as a monument of needle-work.

In the meantime the girls grow up in total ignorance of every thing past, present, and future. Molly asked me the other day, whether Ireland was in France, and was ordered by her mother to mind her hem. Kitty knows not, at sixteen, the difference between a protestant and a papist, because she has been employed three years in filling a side of a closet with a hanging that is to represent Cranmer in the flames. And Dolly, my eldest girl, is now unable to read a chapter in the Bible, having spent all the time, which other children pass at school, in working the interview between Solomon and the queen of Sheba.

About a month ago Tent and Turkey-stitch seemed at a stand; my wife knew not what new work to introduce; I ventured to propose that the girls should now learn to read and write, and mentioned the necessity of a little arithmetic; but, unhappily, my wife has discovered that linen wears out and has bought the girls three little wheels that they may spin huckaback for the servants' table. I remonstrated, that with larger wheels they might despatch in an hour what must now cost them a day; but she told me, with irresistible authority, that any business is better than idleness; that when these wheels are set upon a table with mats under them, they will turn without noise and keep the girls upright; that great wheels are not fit for gentlewomen; and that with these, small as they are, she does not doubt but that the three girls, if they are kept close, will spin every year as much cloth as would cost five pounds if one were to buy it.

No. 14.] Saturday, July 15, 1758.

When Diogenes received a visit in his tub from Alexander the Great, and was asked, according to the ancient forms of royal courtesy, what petition he had to offer; *I have nothing*, said he, *to ask, but that you would remove to the other side, that you may not, by intercepting the sunshine, take from me what you cannot give.*

Such was the demand of Diogenes from the greatest monarch of the earth, which those, who have less power than Alexander, may, with yet more propriety, apply to themselves. He that does much good, may be allowed to do sometimes a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by fortune, innocence should at least be vigilantly preserved.

It is well known that time once past never returns; and that the moment which is lost, is lost forever. Time, therefore, ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invasion; and yet there is no man who does not claim the power of wasting that time which is the right of others.

This usurpation is so general, that a very small part of the year is spent by choice; scarcely any thing is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is desired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders; one steals away an hour, and another a day: one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into business, another by lulling us with amusement; the depredation is continued through a thousand vicissitudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having lost all, we can lose no more.

This waste of the lives of men has been very frequently charged upon the Great, whose followers linger from year to year in expectations, and die at last with petitions in their hands. Those who raise envy will easily incur censure. I know not whether statesmen and patrons do not suffer more reproaches than they deserve, and may not rather themselves complain, that they are given up a prey to pretensions without merit, and to importunity without shame.

The truth is, that the inconveniences of attendance are more lamented than felt. To the greater number solicitation is its own reward. To be seen in good company, to talk of familiarities with men of power, to be able to tell the freshest news, to gratify inferior circles with predictions of increase or decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candidate for high offices, are compensations more than equivalent to the delay of favours, which, perhaps, he that begs them has hardly confidence to expect.

A man, conspicuous in a high station, who multiplies hopes that he may multiply dependents, may be considered as a beast of prey, justly dreaded, but easily avoided; his den is known, and they who would not be devoured, need not approach it. The great danger of the waste of time is from caterpillars and moths, who are not resisted, because they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded mischiefs, and invisible encroachments.

He whose rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, must give up himself, in a great measure, to the convenience or humour of those who surround him. Every man who is sick of himself will fly to him for relief; he that wants to speak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to speak. Hour passes after hour, the noon succeeds to morning, and the evening to noon, while a thousand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as fast as they are offered, but which the custom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindness of others, we must endure their follies. He who cannot persuade himself to withdraw from society, must be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the consulter who asks advice which he never takes; to the boaster who blusters only to be praised; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whose happiness is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himself know to be vain; to the economist, who tells of bargains and settlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances; to the usurer, who compares the different funds; and to the talker, who talks only because he loves to be talking.

To put every man in possession of his own time, and rescue the day from the succession of usurpers, is beyond my power, and beyond my hope. Yet perhaps some stop might be put to this unmerciful persecution, if all would seriously reflect, that whoever pays a visit that is not desired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

No. 15.] Saturday, July 22, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have the misfortune to be a man of business, that, you will say, is a most grievous one; but what makes it the more so to me is, that my wife has nothing to do; at least she had too good an education, and the prospect of too good a fortune in reversion when I married her, to think of employing herself either in my shop affairs, or the management of my family.

Her time, you know, as well as my own, must be filled up some way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind in weighing my goods out, and waiting on my customers; but my wife though she could be of as much use as a shopman to me, if she would put her hand to it, is now only in my way. She walks all the morning sauntering about the shop, with her arms through her pocket-holes, or stands gaping at the door-sill, and looking at every person that passes by. She is continually asking me a thousand frivolous questions about every customer that comes in and goes out; and all the while that I am entering any thing in my day-book, she is lolling over the counter and staring at it, as if I was only scribbling or drawing figures for her amusement. Sometimes, indeed, she will take a needle; but as she always works at the door, or in the middle of the shop, she has so many interruptions, that she is longer hemming a towel, or darning a stocking, than I am in breaking forty loaves of sugar, and making it up into pounds.

In the afternoon I am sure, likewise, to have her company, except she is called upon by some of her acquaintance: and then, as we let out all the upper part of our house, and we have only a little room backwards for ourselves, they either keep such a chattering, or else are calling out every moment to me, that I cannot mind my business for them.

My wife, I am sure, might do all the little matters our family requires; and I could wish that she would employ herself in them; but, instead of that, we have a girl to do the work.

and look after a little boy about two years old, which I may fairly say is the mothers's own child. The brat must be humoured in every thing: he is, therefore, suffered constantly to play in the shop, pull all the goods about, and clamberup the shelves to get at the plums and sugar. I dare not correct him; because, if I did, I should have wife and maid both upon me at once. As to the latter, she is as lazy and sluttish as her mistress; and because she complains she has too much work, we can scarcely get her to do any thing at all; nay, what is worse than that, I am afraid she is hardly honest; and as she is entrusted to buy in all our provisions, the jade, I am sure, makes a marketpenny out of every article.

But to return to my deary.—The evenings are the only time, when it is fine weather, that I am left to myself; for then she generally takes the child out to give it milk in the park. When she comes home again she is so fatigued with walking, that she cannot stir from her chair; and it is an hour after shop is shut, before I can get a bit of supper, while the maid is taken up in undressing and putting the child to bed.

But you will pity me much more when I tell you the manner in which we generally pass our Sundays. In the morning she is commonly too ill to dress herself to go to church; she therefore, never gets up till noon; and what is still more vexatious, keeps me in bed with her, when I ought to be busily engaged in better employment. It is well if she can get her things on by dinner-time; and when that is over I am sure to be dragged out by her, either to Georgia, or Hornsey Wood, or the White-Conduit House. Yet even these near excursions are so very fatiguing to her, that, besides what it costs me in tea and hot rolls, and syllabubs, and cakes for the boy, I am frequently forced to take a hackney-coach, or drive them home in a one-horse chair. At other times, as my wife is rather of the fattest, and a very poor walker, besides bearing her whole weight upon my arm, I am obliged to carry the child myself.

Thus, Sir, does she constantly drawl out her time, without either profit or satisfaction; and, while I see my neighbours' wives helping in the shop, and almost earning as much as their husbands, I have the mortification to find, that mine is nothing but a dead weight upon me. In short, I do not know any greater misfortune can happen to a plain hard-working tradesman, as I am, than to be joined to such a woman, who is rather a clog than a help-mate to him.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

ZACHARY TREACLE.

No. 16.] SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1758.

I PAID a visit yesterday to my old friend Ned Drugget, at his country lodgings. Ned began trade with a very small fortune; he took a small house in an obscure street, and for some years dealt only in remnants. Knowing that *light gains make a heavy purse*, he was content with moderate profit; having observed or heard the effects of civility, he bowed down to the counter-edge at the entrance and departure of every customer, listened without impatience to the objections of the ignorant, and refused without resentment the offers of the penurious. His only recreation was, to stand at his own door and look into the street. His dinner was sent him from a neighbouring alchouse, and he opened and shut the shop at a certain hour with his own hands.

His reputation soon extended from one end of the street to the other; and Mr. Drugget's exemplary conduct was recommended by every master to his apprentice, and by every father to his son. Ned was not only considered as a thriving trader, but as a man of elegance and politeness, for he was remarkably neat in his dress, and would wear his coat threadbare without spotting it; his hat was always brushed, his shoes glossy, his wig nicely curled, and his stockings without a wrinkle. With such qualifications it was not very difficult for him to gain the heart of Miss Comfit, the only daughter of Mr. Comfit the confectioner.

Ned is one of those whose happiness marriage has increased. His wife had the same disposition with himself; and his method of life was very little changed, except that he dismissed the lodgers of the first floor and took the whole house into his own hands.

He had already, by his parsimony accumulated a considerable sum, to which the fortune of his wife was now added. From this time he began to grasp at greater acquisitions, and was always ready with money in his hand, to pick up the refuse of a sale, or to buy the stock of a trader who retired from business. He soon added his parlour to his shop, and was obliged a few months afterwards, to hire a warehouse.

He had now a shop splendidly and copiously furnished with every thing that time had injured, or fashion had degraded, with fragments of tissues, odd yards of brocade, vast bales of faded silk, and innumerable boxes of antiquated ribbons. His shop was soon celebrated through all quarters of the town, and frequented by every form of ostentatious poverty. Every maid whose misfortune it was to be taller than her lady, matched her gown a Mr. Drugget's; and many a maiden who had passed a winter, with her aunt in London, dazzled the rustics, at her return, with cheap finery which Drugget had supplied. His shop was often visited in a morning by ladies who left their coaches in the next street, and crept through the alley in linen gowns. Drugget knows the rank of his customers by their bashfulness; and when he finds them unwilling to be seen he invites them up stairs or retires with them to the back window.

I rejoiced at the increasing prosperity of my friend, and imagined that as he grew rich, he was growing happy. His mind has partaken the enlargement of his fortune. When I stepped in for the first five years, I was welcomed only with a shake of the hand; in the next period of his life, he beckoned across the way for a pot of beer; but for six years past he

invited me to dinner; and if he bespeaks me the day before, never fails to regale me with a fillet of veal.

His riches neither make him uneivil nor negligent; he rose at the same hour, attended with the same assidnity, and bowed with the same gentleness. But for some years he has been much inclined to talk of the fatigues of business and the confinement of a shop, and to wish that he had been so happy as to have renewed his uncle's lease of a farm, that he might have lived without noise and hurry, in a pure air, in the artless society of honest villagers, and the contemplation of the works of nature.

I soon discovered the cause of my friend's philosophy. He thought himself grown rich enough to have a lodging in the country, like the mercers on Ludgate-hill, and was resolved to enjoy himself in the decline of life. This was a revolution not to be made suddenly. He talked three years of the pleasures of the country, but passed every night over his own shop. But at last he resolved to be happy, and hired a lodging in the country, that he may steal some hours in the week from business; for, says he, *when a man advances in life, he loves to entertain himself sometimes with his own thoughts.*

I was invited to this seat of quiet and contemplation among those whom Mr. Drugget considers as his most reputable friends, and desires to make the first witnesses of his elevation to the highest dignities of a shopkeeper. I found him at Islington, in a room which overlooked the high road, amusing himself with looking through the window, which the clouds of dust would not suffer him to open. He embraced me, told me I was welcome into the country, and asked me, if I did not feel myself refreshed. He then desired that dinner might be hastened, for fresh air always sharpened his appetite, and ordered me a toast and a glass of wine after my walk. He told me much of the pleasure he found in retirement, and wondered what had kept him so long out of the country. After dinner, company came in, and Mr. Drugget again repeated the praises of the country, recommended the pleasures of meditation, and told them, that he had been all the morning at the window, counting the carriages as they passed before him.

No. 17.] Saturday, Aug. 5, 1758.

The rainy weather, which has continued the last month is said to have given great disturbance to the inspectors of barometers. The oraculous glasses have deceived their votaries; shower has succeeded shower though they predicted sunshine and dry skies; and by fatal confidence in these fallacious promises, many coats have lost their gloss, and many curls have been moistened to flaccidity.

This is one of the distresses to which mortals subject themselves by the pride of speculation. I had no part in this learned disappointment, who am content to credit my senses, and to believe that rain will fall when the air blackens, and that the weather will be dry when the sun is bright. My caution indeed does not always preserve me from a shower. To be wet, may happen to the genuine *Idler;* but to be wet in opposition to theory, can befall only the *Idler* that pretends to be busy. Of those that spin out life in trifles, and die without a memorial, many flatter themselves with high opinions of their own importance, and imagine that they are every day adding some improvement to human life. To be idle and to be poor, have always been reproaches, and therefore every man endeavours, with his utmost care, to hide his poverty from others, and his *idleness* from himself.

Among those whom I never could persuade to rank themselves with *Idlers*, and who speak with indignation of my morning sleeps and nocturnal rambles, one passes the day in catching spiders, that he may count their eyes with a microscope; another erects his head, and exhibits the dust of a marygold separated from the flower with a dexterity worthy of Leuwenhoeck himself. Some turn the wheel of electricity: some suspend rings to a loadstone, and find that what they did yesterday they can do again to-day. Some register the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colourless liquors may produce a colour by union, and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled; they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, say it is strange, and mingle them again.

The *Idlers* that sport only with inanimate nature may claim some indulgence; if they are useless, they are still innocent; but there are others, whom I know not how to mention without more emotion than my love of quiet willingly admits. Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches, whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is, to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon; and whether the more lasting agonies are produced by poison forced into the mouth, or injected into the veins.

It is not without reluctance that I offend the sensibility of the tender mind with images like these. If such cruelties were not practised, it were to be desired that they should not be conceived; but, since they are published every day with ostentation, let me be allowed once to mention them since I mention them with abhorrence.

Mead has invidiously remarked of Woodward, that he gathered shells and stones, and would pass for a philosopher. With pretensions much less reasonable, the anatomical novice tears out the living bowels of an animal, and styles himself physician, prepares himself by familiar cruelty for that profession which he is to exercise upon the tender and the helpless, upon feeble bodies and broken minds, and by which he has opportunities to extend his arts of torture, and continue those experiments upon

infancy and age, which he has hitherto tried upon cats and dogs.

What is alleged in defence of these hateful practices, every one knows; but the truth is, that by knives, fire, and poison, knowledge is not always sought, and is very seldom attained. The experiments that have been tried, are tried again; he that burned an animal with irons yesterday, will be willing to amuse himself with burning another to-morrow. I know not, that by living dissections any discovery has been made by which a single malady is more easily cured. And if the knowledge of physiology has been somewhat increased, he surely buys knowledge dear, who learns the use of the lacteals at the expense of his humanity. It is time that universal resentment should arise against these horrid operations, which tend to harden the heart, extinguish those sensations which give man confidence in man, and make the physician more dreadful than the gout or stone.

No. 18.] Saturday, Aug. 12, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

It commonly happens to him who endeavours to obtain distinction by ridicule, or censure, that he teaches others to practise his own arts against himself; and that, after a short enjoyment of the applause paid to his sagacity, or of the mirth excited by his wit, he is doomed to suffer the same severities of scrutiny, to hear inquiry detecting his faults, and exaggeration sporting with his failings.

The natural discontent of inferiority will seldom fail to operate in some degree of malice against him who professes to superintend the conduct of others, especially if he seats himself uncalled in the chair of judicature, and exercises authority by his own commission.

You cannot, therefore wonder that your observations on human folly, if they produce laughter at one time, awaken criticism at another; and that among the numbers whom you have taught to scoff at the retirement of Drugget there is one who offers his apology.

The mistake of your old friend is by no means peculiar. The public pleasures of far the greater part of mankind are counterfeit. Very few carry their philosophy to places of diversion, or are very careful to analyse their enjoyments. The general condition of life is so full of misery, that we are glad to catch delight without inquiring whence it comes, or by what power it is bestowed.

The mind is seldom quickened to very vigorous operations but by pain, or the dread of pain. We do not disturb ourselves with the detection of fallacies which do us no harm, nor willingly decline a pleasing effect to investigate its cause. He that is happy, by whatever means, desires nothing but the continuance of happiness, and is no more solicitous to distribute his sensations into their proper species, than the common gazer on the beauties of the spring to separate light into its original rays.

Pleasure is therefore seldom such as it appears to others, nor often such as we represent it to ourselves. Of the ladies that sparkle at a musical performance, a very small number has any quick sensibility of harmonious sounds. But every one that goes has her pleasure. She has the pleasure of wearing fine clothes and of showing them, of outshining those whom she suspects to envy her; she has the pleasure of appearing among other ladies in a place whither the race of meaner mortals seldom intrudes, and of reflecting that, in the conversations of the next morning, her name will be mentioned among those that sat in the first row; she has the pleasure of returning courtesies or refusing to return them, of receiving compliments with civility, or rejecting them with disdain. She has the pleasure of meeting some of her acquaintance, of guessing why the rest are absent, and of telling them that she saw the opera, on pretence of inquiring why they would miss it. She has the pleasure of being supposed to be pleased with a refined amusement, and of hoping to be numbered among the votaresses of harmony. She has the pleasure of escaping for two hours the superiority of a sister, or the control of a husband; and from all these pleasures she concludes, that heavenly music is the balm of life.

All assemblies of gaycty are brought together by motives of the same kind. The theatre is not filled with those that know or regard the skill of the actor, nor the ball-room by those who dance, or attend to the dancers. To all places of general resort, where the standard of pleasure is erected, we run with equal eagerness, or appearance of eagerness, for very different reasons. One goes that he may say he has been there, another because he never misses. This man goes to try what he can find, and that to discover what others find. Whatever diversion is costly will be frequented by those who desire to be thought rich; and whatever has by any accident become fashionable, easily continues its reputation, because every one is ashamed of not partaking it.

To every place of entertainment we go with expectation and desire of being pleased; we meet others who are brought by the same motives; no one will be the first to own the disappointment; one face reflects the smile of another, till each believes the rest delighted, and endeavours to catch and transmit the circulating rapture. In time all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute. The fiction of happiness is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at last all profess the joy which they do not feel, consent to yield to the general delusion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliss is of so short a duration.

If Drugget pretended to pleasures of which he had no perception, or boasted of one amusement where he was indulging another, what did he which is not done by all those who read his story? of whom some pretend delight in conversation, only because they dare not be alone; some praise the quiet of solitude, because they are envious of sense, and impatient of folly;

and some gratify their pride, by writing characters which expose the vanity of life.

I am, Sir,
Your humble Servant.

No. 19.] Saturday, Aug. 19, 1758.

Some of those ancient sages that have exercised their abilities in the inquiry after the *supreme good*, have been of opinion, that the highest degree of earthly happiness is quiet; a calm repose both of mind and body, undisturbed by the sight of folly or the noise of business, the tumults of public commotion, or the agitations of private interest; a state in which the mind has no other employment, but to observe and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raise systems of science, and form theories of virtue.

To the scheme of these solitary speculatists, it has been justly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being useless. That mankind is one vast republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labours of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from misery, none have a right to withdraw from their task of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wisdom or solitary pleasures.

It is common for controvertists in the heat of disputation, to add one position to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falsehood lose their distinction. Their admirers follow them to the brink of absurdity, and then start back from each side towards the middle point. So it has happened in this great disquisition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments, find quiet shameful, and business dangerous; and therefore pass their lives between them, in bustle without business, and negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate set is that great philosopher Jack Whirler, whose business keeps him in perpetual motion, and whose motion always eludes his business; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot stand still because he is wanted in another place and who is wanted in many places because he stays in none.

Jack has more business than he can conveniently transact in one house; he has therefore one habitation near Bow-Church, and another about a mile distant. By this ingenious distribution of himself between two houses, Jack has contrived to be found at neither. Jack's trade is extensive, and he has many dealers; his conversation is sprightly, and he has many companions; his disposition is kind and he has many friends. Jack neither forbears pleasure for business, nor omits business for pleasure, but is equally invisible to his friends and his customers; to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to settle an account.

When you call at his house, his clerk tells you, that Mr. Whirler has just stept out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-house till two, and then find that he has been at home, and is gone out again, but left word that he should be at the Half-moon tavern at seven, where he hopes to meet you. At seven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. Whirler to tell you, that he is glad to see you and only begs leave to run for a few minutes to a gentleman that lives near the Exchange, from whom he will return before supper can be ready. Away he runs to the Exchange, to tell those who are waiting for him, that he must beg them to defer the business till to-morrow, because his time is come at the Half-moon.

Jack's cheerfulness and civility rank him among those whose presence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondness and caresses. He calls often on his friends to tell them, that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again, to tell them how an unexpected summons hurries him away. When he enters a house, his first declaration is, that he cannot sit down; and so short are his visits, that he seldom appears to have come for any other reason but to say he must go.

The dogs of Egypt, when thirst brings them to the Nile are said to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. Jack Whirler always dines at full speed. He enters, finds the family at table, sits familiarly down and fills his plate; but while the first morsel is in his mouth, hears the clock strike, and rises; then goes to another house, sits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taste the soup, makes a short excuse to the company, and continues through another street his desultory dinner.

But overwhelmed as he is with business, his chief desire is to have still more. Every new proposal takes possession of his thoughts; he soon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almost to completion, and then forsakes it for another, which he catches with some alacrity, urges with the same vehemence, and abandons with the same coldness.

Every man may be observed to have a certain strain of lamentation, some peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. Jack's topic of sorrow is his want of time. Many an excellent design languishes in empty theory for want of time. For the omission of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuse to himself. That he wants time he sincerely believes; for he once pined away many months with a lingering distemper, for want of time to attend to his health.

Thus Jack Whirler lives in perpetual fatigues without proportionate advantage, because he does not consider that no man can see all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands; that whoever is engaged in multiplicity of business, must transact much by substitution, and leave something to hazard; and that he who attempts to do all, will waste his life in doing little.

No. 20.] Saturday, Aug. 26, 1758.

There is no crime more infamous than the violation of truth. It is apparent that men can be social beings no longer than they believe each other. When speech is employed only as the vehicle of falsehood, every man must disunite himself from others, inhabit his own cave, and seek prey only for himself.

Yet the law of truth, thus sacred and necessary, is broken without punishment, without censure, in compliance with inveterate prejudice and prevailing passions. Men are willing to credit what they wish, and encourage rather those who gratify them with pleasures, than those that instruct them with fidelity.

For this reason every historian discovers his country; and it is impossible to read the different accounts of any great event, without a wish that truth had more power over partiality.

Amidst the joy of my countrymen for the acquisition of Louisbourg, I could not forbear to consider how differently this revolution of American power is not only now mentioned by the contending nations, but will be represented by the writers of another century.

The English historian will imagine himself barely doing justice to English virtue, when he relates the capture of Louisbourg in the following manner:—

"The English had hitherto seen, with great indignation, their attempts baffled and their force defied by an enemy, whom they considered themselves as entitled to conquer by the right of prescription, and whom many ages of hereditary superiority had taught them to despise. Their fleets were more numerous, and their seamen braver, than those of France; yet they only floated useless on the ocean, and the French derided them from their ports. Misfortunes, as is usual, produced discontent, the people murmured at the ministers, and the ministers censured the commanders.

"In the summer of this year, the English began to find their success answerable to their cause. A fleet and an army were sent to America to dislodge the enemies from the settlements which they had so perfidiously made, and so insolently maintained, and to repress that power which was growing more every day by the association of the Indians with whom these degenerate Europeans intermarried, and whom they secured to their party by presents and promises.

"In the beginning of June the ships of war and vessels containing the land forces appeared before Louisbourg, a place so secure by nature that art was almost superfluous, and yet fortified by art as if nature had left it open. The French boasted that it was impregnable, and spoke with scorn of all attempts that could be made against it. The garrison was numerous, the stores equal to the longest siege, and their engineers and commanders high in reputation.

"The mouth of the harbour was so narrow, that three ships within might easily defend it against all attacks from the sea. The French had, with that caution which cowards borrow from fear, and attribute to policy, eluded our fleets, and sent into that port five great ships and six smaller, of which they sunk four in the mouth of the passage, having raised batteries and posted troops at all the places where they thought it possible to make a descent. The English, however, had more to dread from the roughness of the sea, than from the skill or bravery of the defendants. Some days passed before the surges, which rise very high round that island, would suffer them to land. At last their impatience could be restrained no longer; they got possession of the shore with little loss by the sea, and with less by the enemy. In a few days the artillery was landed, the batteries were raised, and the French had no other hope than to escape from one post to another. A shot from the batteries fired the powder in one of their largest ships, the flame spread to the two next, and all three were destroyed; the English admiral sent his boats against the two large ships yet remaining, took them without resistance, and terrified the garrison to an immediate capitulation."

Let us now oppose to this English narrative the relation which will be produced, about the same time, by the writer of the age of Louis XV.

"About this time, the English admitted to the conduct of affairs a man who undertook to save from destruction that ferocious and turbulent people, who from the mean insolence of wealthy traders, and the lawless confidence of successful robbers, were now sunk in despair and stupified with horror. He called in the ships which had been dispersed over the ocean to guard their merchants, and sent a fleet and an army, in which almost the whole strength of England was comprised, to secure their possessions in America, which were endangered alike by the French arms and the French virtue. We had taken the English fortresses by force, and gained the Indian nations by humanity. The English wherever they come, are sure to have the natives for their enemies: for, the only motive of their settlements is avarice, and the only consequence of their success is oppression. In this war they acted like other barbarians, and, with a degree of outrageous cruelty which the gentleness of our manners scarcely suffers us to conceive, offered rewards by open proclamation to those who should bring in the scalps of Indian women and children. A trader always makes war with the cruelty of a pirate.

"They had long looked with envy and with terror upon the influence which the French exerted over all the northern regions of America by the possession of Louisbourg, a place naturally strong, and new fortified with some slight outworks. They hoped to surprise the garrison unprovided; but that sluggishness which always defeats their malice, gave us time to send supplies, and to station ships for the defence of the harbour. They came before Louisbourg in June, and were for some time in doubt whether they should land. But the commanders, who had lately seen an admiral beheaded for not having done what he had not power to do, durst not leave the place unassaulted. An Englishman has no ardour for honour, nor zeal for duty; he neither values glory nor loves his king, but balances one danger with

another, and will fight rather than be hanged. They therefore landed, but with great loss, their engineers had, in the last war with the French, learned something of the military science, and made their approaches with sufficient skill; but all their efforts had been without effect, had not a ball unfortunately fallen into the powder of one our ships, which communicated the fire to the rest, and, by opening the passage of the harbour, obliged the garrison to capitulate. Thus was Louisbourg lost, and our troops marched out with the admiration of their enemies, who durst hardly think themselves masters of the place."

No. 21.] Saturday, Sept. 2, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Dear Mr. Idler,

There is a species of misery, or of disease, for which our language is commonly supposed to be without a name, but which I think is emphatically enough denominated *listlessness*, and which is commonly termed a want of something to do.

Of the unhappiness of this state I do not expect all your readers to have an adequate idea. Many are overburthened with business, and can imagine no comfort but in rest; many have minds so placid, as willingly to indulge a voluntary lethargy; or so narrow, as easily to be filled to their utmost capacity. By these I shall not be understood, and therefore cannot be pitied. Those only will sympathise with my complaint, whose imagination is active and resolution weak, whose desires are ardent, and whose choice is delicate; who cannot satisfy themselves with standing still, and yet cannot find a motive to direct their course.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose estate was barely sufficient to support himself and his heir in the dignity of killing game. He therefore made use of the interest which the alliances of his family afforded him, to procure me a post in the army. I passed some years in the most contemptible of all human stations, that of a soldier in time of peace. I wandered with the regiment as the quarters were changed, without opportunity for business, taste for knowledge, or money for pleasure. Wherever I came, I was for some time a stranger without curiosity, and afterwards an acquaintance without friendship. Having nothing to hope in these places of fortuitous residence, I resigned my conduct to chance; I had no intention to offend, I had no ambition to delight.

I suppose every man is shocked when he hears how frequently soldiers are wishing for war. The wish is not always sincere; the greater part are content with sleep and lace, and counterfeit an ardour which they do not feel; but those who desire it most are neither prompted by malevolence nor patriotism; they neither pant for laurels nor delight in blood; but long to be delivered from the tyranny of idleness, and restored to the dignity of active beings.

I never imagined myself to have more courage than other men, yet was often involuntarily wishing for a war, but of a war at that time I had no prospect; and being enabled, by the death of an uncle, to live without my pay, I quitted the army, and resolved to regulate my own motions.

I was pleased, for a while, with the novelty of independence, and imagined that I had now found what every man desires. My time was in my own power, and my habitation was wherever my choice should fix it. I amused myself for two years in passing from place to place, and comparing one convenience with another; but being at last ashamed of inquiry, and weary of uncertainty, I purchased a house, and established my family.

I now expected to begin to be happy, and was happy for a short time with that expectation. But I soon perceived my spirits to subside, and my imagination to grow dark. The gloom thickened every day around me. I wondered by what malignant power my peace was blasted, till I discovered at last that I had no thing to do.

Time, with all its celerity, moves slowly to him whose whole employment is to watch its flight. I am forced upon a thousand shifts to enable me to endure the tediousness of the day. I rise when I can sleep no longer, and take my morning walk; I see what I have seen before, and return. I set down and persuade myself that I sit down to think, find it impossible to think without a subject, rise up to inquire after news, and endeavour to kindle in myself an artificial impatience for intelligence of events, which will never extend any consequence to me, but that a few minutes they abstract me from myself.

When I have heard any thing that may gratify curiosity, I am busied for a while in running to relate it. I hasten from one place of concourse to another, delighted with my own importance, and proud to think that I am doing something, though I know that another hour would spare my labour.

I had once a round of visits, which I paid very regularly; but I have now tired most of my friends. When I have sat down I forget to rise, and have more than once overheard one asking another when I would be gone. I perceive the company tired, I observe the mistress of the family whispering to her servants, I find orders given to put off business till to-morrow, I see the watches frequently inspected, and yet cannot withdraw to the vacuity of solitude, or venture myself in my own company.

Thus burthensome to myself and others, I form many schemes of employment which may make my life useful or agreeable, and exempt me from the ignominy of living by sufferance. This new course I have long designed, but have not yet begun. The present moment is never proper for the change, but there is always a time in view when all obstacles will be removed, and I shall surprise all that know me with a new distribution of my time. Twenty years have passed since I have resolved a complete amendment, and twenty years have been lost in delays. Age is coming upon me; and I should look back with rage and despair

upon the waste of life, but that I am now beginning in earnest to begin a reformation.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

DICK LINGER.

No. 22.] SATURDAY SEPT. 16 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

As I was passing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was struck with horror by a rueful cry which summoned me to *remember the poor debtors*.

The wisdom and justice of the English laws are, by Englishmen at least loudly, celebrated: but scarcely the most zealous admirers of our institutions can think that law wise, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or just, which exposes the liberty of one to the passions of another.

The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed. To the community, sedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleness is an atrophy. Whatever body, and whatever society wastes more than it acquires, must gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed, and ceases to labour, takes away something from the public stock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the sloth and darkness of a prison, is a loss to the nation, and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in those cells of misery, a very small part is suspected of any fraudulent act by which they retain what belongs to others. The rest are imprisoned by the wantonness of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of dissappointed expectation.

If those, who thus rigorously exercise the power which the law has put into their hands, be asked, why they continue to imprison those whom they know to be unable to pay them? one will answer, that his debtor once lived better than himself; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in silk clothes to the dancing-school; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt, they should meet with the same treatment; some, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need therefore give no account of their actions. Some will confess their resolution that their debtors shall rot in gaol; and some will discover, that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is, to secure private happiness from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another: but this end is apparently neglected, when a man, irritated with loss, is allowed to be the judge of his own cause, and to assign the punishment of his own pain; when the distinction between guilt and happiness, between casualty and design, is entrusted to eyes blind with interest, to understandings depraved by resentment.

Since poverty is punished among us as a crime, it ought at least to be treated with the same lenity as other crimes: the offender ought not to languish at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed some appeal to the justice of his country. There can be no reason why any debtor should be imprisoned, but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term should therefore be fixed, in which the creditor should exhibit his accusation of concealed property. If such property can be discovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered, or cannot be proved, let the prisoner be dismissed.

Those who made the laws have apparently supposed, that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always shares the act, and often more than shares the guilt of improper trust. It seldom happens that any man imprisons another but for debts which he suffered to be contracted in hope of advantage to himself, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reason why one should punish the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of prisons may justly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience, by increasing hi debt. Worse and worse commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoverished by compulsive traffic, and at last overwhelmed, in the common receptacles of misery, by debts, which, without his own consent, were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this distress, no other objection can be made, but that by an easy dissolution of debts, fraud will be left without punishment, and imprudence without awe; and that when insolvency should be no longer punishable, credit will cease.

The motive to credit is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a stop, while one man wants what another can supply; and credit will never be denied, while it is likely to be repaid with profit. He that trusts one whom he designs to sue, is criminal by the act of trust: the cessation of such insiduous traffic is to be desired, and no reason can be given why a change of the law should impair any other.

We see nation trade with nation, where no payment can be compelled. Mutual convenience produces mutual confidence; and the merchants continue to satisfy the demands of each other, though they have nothing to dread but the loss of trade.

It is vain to continue an institution, which experience shows to be ineffectual. We have now imprisoned one generation of debtors after another, but we do not find that their numbers lessen. We have now learned that rashness and imprudence will not be deterred from taking credit; let us try whether fraud and avarice may be more easily restrained from giving it.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 23.] Saturday, Sept. 23, 1758.

Life has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of friendship. It is painful to consider, that this sublime enjoyment may be impaired or destroyed by innumerable causes, and that there is no human possession of which the duration is less certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language, of the perpetuity of friendship, of invincible constancy, and unalienable kindness; and some examples have been seen of men who have continued faithful to their earliest choice, and whose affection has predominated over changes of fortune, and contrariety of opinion.

But these instances are memorable, because they are rare. The friendship which is to be practised or expected by common mortals, must take its rise from mutual pleasure, and must end when power ceases of delighting each other.

Many accidents therefore may happen, by which the ardour of kindness will be abated, without criminal baseness or contemptible inconstancy on either part. To give pleasure is not always in our power; and little does he know himself, who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Those who would gladly pass their days together may be separated by the different course of their affairs: and friendship, like love, is destroyed by long absence, though it may be increased by short intermissions. What we have missed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been lost till it is forgotten, will be found at last with little gladness, and with still less, if a substitute has supplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he used to open his bosom, and with whom he shared the hours of leisure and merriment, feels the day at first hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppress, and his doubts distract him; he sees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is sadness within and solitude about him. But this uneasiness never lasts long; necessity produces expedients, new amusements are discovered, and new conversation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently disappointed, than that which naturally arises in the mind from the prospect of meeting an old friend after long separation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man considers how much alteration time has made in himself, and very few inquire what effect it has had upon others. The first hour convinces them, that the pleasure which they have formerly enjoyed, is forever at an end; different scenes have made different impressions; the opinions of both are changed; and that similitude of manners and sentiment is lost which confirmed them both in the approbation of themselves.

Friendship is often destroyed by opposition of interest, not only by the ponderous and visible interest which the desire of wealth and greatness forms and maintains, but by a thousand secret and slight competitions, scarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is scarcely any man without some favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments, some desire of petty praise which he cannot patiently suffer to be frustrated. This minute ambition is sometimes crossed before it is known, and sometimes defeated by wanton petulance; but such attacks are seldom made without the loss of friendship; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the resentment will burn on in secret, of which shame hinders the discovery.

This, however, is a slow malignity, which a wise man will obviate as inconsistent with quiet, and a good man will repress as contrary to virtue; but human happiness is sometimes violated by some more sudden strokes.

A dispute begun in jest upon a subject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careless indifference, is continued by the desire of conquest, till vanity kindles into rage, and opposition rankles into enmity. Against this hasty mischief, I know not what security can be obtained; men will be sometimes surprised into quarrels; and though they might both hasten to reconciliation, as soon as their tumult had subsided, yet two minds will seldom be found together, which can at once subdue their discontent, or immediately enjoy the sweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendship has other enemies. Suspicion is always hardening the cautious, and disgust repelling the delicate. Very slender differences will sometimes part those whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. Lonelove and Ranger retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in six weeks cold and petulant: Ranger's pleasure was, to walk in the fields, and Lonelove's to sit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay, or dislike hourly increased by causes too slender for complaint and too numerous for removal. Those who are angry may be reconciled; those who have been injured may receive a recompense; but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased is silently diminished, the renovation of friendship is hopeless; as, when the vital powers sink into langour, there is no longer any use of the physician.

No. 24.] Saturday, Sept. 30, 1758.

When man sees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree or basking in the sunshine, without any apparent endeavour or pursuit, he often asks himself, or his companion, *On what that animal can be supposed to be thinking?*

Of this question since neither bird nor beast can answer it, we must be content to live without the resolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the past, or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not rest in motionless indifference, till they are

moved by the presence of their proper object, or stimulated to act by corporal sensations.

I am the less inclined to these superfluous inquiries, because I have always been able to find sufficient matter for curiosity in my own species. It is useless to go far in quest of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of observation will supply a sufficient number of men and women, who might be asked, with equal propriety, *On what they can be thinking?*

It is reasonable to believe, that thought, like every thing else, has its causes and effects; that it must proceed from something known, done, or suffered; and must produce some action or event. Yet how great is the number of those in whose minds no source of thought has ever been opened, in whose life no thought of consequence is ever discovered; who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have neither seen nor felt any thing which could leave its traces on the memory; who neither foresee nor desire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear hope, nor design, and yet are supposed to be thinking beings.

To every act a subject is required. He that thinks must think upon something. But tell me, ye that pierce deepest into nature, ye that take the widest surveys of life, inform me, kind shades of Malbranche and of Locke, what that something can be, which excites and continues thought in maiden aunts with small fortunes; in younger brothers that live upon annuities; in traders retired from business; in soldiers absent from their regiments; or in widows that have no children?

Life is commonly considered as either active or contemplative; but surely this division, how long soever it has been received, is inadequate and fallacious. There are mortals whose life is certainly not active for they do neither good nor evil; and whose life cannot be properly called contemplative, for they never attend either to the conduct of men, or the works of nature, but rise in the morning, look round them till night in careless stupidity, go to bed and sleep, and rise again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated question in the schools of philosophy, *Whether the soul always thinks?* Some have defined the soul to be the *power of thinking;* concluded that its essence consists in act; that, if it should cease to act, it would cease to be; and that cessation of thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is subtile, but not conclusive; because it supposes what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined. Others affect to disdain subtilty, when subtilty will not serve their purpose, and appeal to daily experience. We spend many hours, they say, in sleep, without the least remembrance of any thoughts which then passed in our minds; and since we can only by our own consciousness be sure that we think, why should we imagine that we have had thought of which no consciousness remains?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do something which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by consequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been passed in thought; yet he that shall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of the former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy; he will find, that the greater part is irrevocably vanished, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave so little behind them.

To discover only that the arguments on both sides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into its former uncertainty, is the sport of wanton or malevolent scepticism, delighting to see the sons of philosophy at work upon a task which never can be decided. I shall suggest an argument hitherto overlooked, which may perhaps determine the controversy.

If it be impossible to think without materials, there must necessarily be minds that do not always think; and whence shall we furnish materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the sportsman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds?

But how frequent soever may be the examples of existence without thought, it is certainly a state not much to be desired. He that lives in torpid insensibility, wants nothing of a carcass but putrefaction. It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleasures of his fellow-beings; and, as in a road through a country desert and uniform, the traveller languishes for want of amusement, so the passage of life will be tedious and irksome to him who does not beguile it by diversified ideas.

No. 25.] Saturday, Oct. 7, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I am am a very constant frequenter of the playhouse, a place to which I suppose the *Idler* not much a stranger, since he can have no where else so much entertainment with so little concurrence of his own endeavour. At all other assemblies he that comes to receive delight, will be expected to give it; but in the theatre nothing is necessary to the amusement of two hours, but to sit down and be willing to be pleased.

The last week has offered two new actors to the town. The appearance and retirement of actors are the great events of the theatrical world; and their first performance fills the pit with conjecture and prognostication, as the first actions of a new monarch agitate nations with hope or fear.

What opinion I have formed of the future excellence of these candidates for dramatic glory, it is not necessary to declare. Their entrance gave me a higher and nobler pleasure than any borrowed character can afford. I saw the ranks of the theatre emulating each other in candour and humanity, and contending who should most effectually assist the struggles of

endeavour, dissipate the blush of diffidence, and still the flutter of timidity.

This behaviour is such as becomes a people, too tender to repress those who wish to please, too generous to insult those who can make no resistance. A public performer is so much in the power of spectators, that all unnecessary severity is restrained by that general law of humanity which forbids us to be cruel, where there is nothing to be feared.

In every new performer something must be pardoned. No man can by any force of resolution, secure to himself the full posession of his own powers under the eye of a large assembly. Variation of gesture, and flexion of voice, are to be obtained only by experience.

There is nothing for which such numbers think themselves qualified as for theatrical exhibition. Every human being has an action graceful to his own eye, a voice musical to his own ear, and a sensibility which nature forbids him to know that any other bosom can excel. An art in which such numbers fancy themselves excellent, and which the public liberally rewards, will excite many competitors, and in many attempts there must be many miscarriages.

The care of the critic should be to distinguish error from inability, faults of inexperience from defects of nature. Action irregular and turbulent may be reclaimed; vociferation vehement and confused may be restrained and modulated; the stalk of the tyrant may become the gait of the man; the yell of inarticulate distress may be reduced to human lamentation. All these faults should be for a time overlooked, and afterwards censured with gentleness and candour. But if in an actor there appears an utter vacancy of meaning, a frigid equality, a stupid languor, a torbid apathy, the greatest kindness that can be shown him, is a speedy sentence of expulsion.

I am, Sir &c.

The plea which my correspondent has offered for young actors, I am very far from wishing to invalidate. I always considered those combinations which are sometimes formed in the playhouse, as acts of fraud or of cruelty; he that applauds him who does not deserve praise, is endeavouring to deceive the public: he that hisses in malice or sport, is an oppressor and a robber.

But surely this laudable forbearance might be justly extended to young poets. The art of the writer, like that of the player, is attained by slow degrees. The power of distinguishing and discriminating comic characters, or of filling tragedy with poetical images, must be the gift of nature, which no instruction nor labour can supply; but the art of dramatic disposition, the contexture of the scenes, the opposition of characters, the involution of the plot, the expedients of suspension, and the stratagems of surprise are to be learned by practice; and it is cruel to discourage a poet for ever, because he has not from genius what only experience can bestow.

Life is a stage. Let me likewise solicit candour for the young actor on the stage of life. They that enter into the world are too often treated with unreasonable rigour by those that were once as ignorant and heady as themselves; and distinction is not always made between the faults which require speedy and violent eradication, and those that will gradually drop away in the progression of life. Vicious solicitations of appetite, if not checked will grow more importunate; and mean arts of profit or ambition will gather strength in the mind, if they are not early suppressed. But mistaken notions of superiority, desires of useless show, pride of little accomplishments, and all the train of vanity, will be brushed away by the wing of Time.

Reproof should not exhaust its power upon petty failings; let it watch diligently against the incursion of vice, and leave foppery and futility to die of themselves.

No. 26.] Saturday, Oct. 14, 1758.

Mr. Idler,

I never thought that I should write any thing to be printed; but having lately seen your first essay, which was sent down into the kitchen, with a great bundle of gazettes and useless papers, I find that you are willing to admit any correspondent, and therefore hope you will not reject me. If you publish my letter, it may encourage others, in the same condition with myself, to tell their stories, which may be perhaps as useful as those of great ladies.

I am a poor girl. I was bred in the country at a charity-school, maintained by the contributions of wealthy neighbours. The ladies, or patronesses, visited us from time to time, examined how we were taught, and saw that our clothes were clean. We lived happily enough, and were instructed to be thankful to those at whose cost we were educated. I was always the favourite of my mistress; she used to call me to read, and show my copy-book to all strangers, who never dismissed me without commendation, and very seldom without a shilling.

At last the chief of our subscribers, having passed a winter in London, came down full of an opinion new and strange to the whole country. She held it little less than criminal to teach poor girls to read and write. They who are born to poverty, said she, are born to ignorance, and will work the harder the less they know.

She told her friends, that London was in confusion by the insolence of servants; that scarcely a wench was to be got for *allwork*, since education had made such numbers of fine ladies, that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of a waiting-maid or something that might qualify her to wear laced shoes and long ruffles, and to sit at work in the parlour window. But she was resolved, for her part, to spoil no more girls; those, who were to live by their hands, should neither read nor write out of her pocket; the world was bad enough already, and she would have no part in making it worse.

She was for a short time warmly opposed

but she perseverd in her notions, and withdrew her subscription. Few listen without a desire of conviction to those who advise them to spare their money. Her example and her arguments gained ground daily; and in less than a year the whole parish was convinced, that the nation would be ruined, if the children of the poor were taught to read and write.

Our school was now dissolved; my mistress kissed me when we parted, and told me, that, being old and helpless, she could not assist me, advised me to seek a service, and charged me not to forget what I had learned.

My reputation for scholarship, which had hitherto recommended me to favour, was, by the adherents to the new opinion, considered as a crime; and, when I offered myself to any mistress, I had no other answer than *Sure, child, you would not work! hard work is not fit for a pen-woman; a scrubbing brush would spoil your hand, child!*

I could not live at home; and while I was considering to what I should betake me, one of the girls, who had gone from our school to London, came down in a silk gown and told her acquaintance how well she lived, what fine things she saw, and what great wages she received. I resolved to try my fortune, and took my passage in the next week's wagon to London. I had no snares laid for me at my arrival, but came safe to a sister of my mistress, who undertook to get me a place. She knew only the families of mean tradesmen; and I, having no high opinion of my own qualifications, was willing to accept the first offer.

My first mistress was wife of a working watchmaker, who earned more than was sufficient to keep his family in decency and plenty; but it was their constant practice to hire a chaise on Sunday, and spent half the wages of the week on Richmond Hill; of Monday he commonly lay half in bed, and spent the other half in merriment; Tuesday and Wednesday consumed the rest of his money; and three days every week were passed in extremity of want by us who were left at home, while my master lived on trust at an ale-house. You may be sure, that of the sufferers, the maid suffered most; and I left them, after three months, rather than be starved.

I was then maid to a hatter's wife. There was no want to be dreaded, for they lived in perpetual luxury. My mistress was a diligent woman, and rose early in the morning to set the journeymen to work; my master was a man much beloved by his neighbours, and sat at one club or other every night. I was obliged to wait on my master at night, and on my mistress in the morning. He seldom came home before two, and she rose at five. I could no more live without sleep than without food, and therefore entreated them to look out for another servant.

My next removal was to a linen-draper's, who had six children. My mistress, when I first entered the house, informed me, that I must never contradict the children, nor suffer them to cry. I had no desire to offend, and readily promised to do my best. But when I gave them their breakfast, I could not help all first; when I was playing with one in my lap, I was forced to keep the rest in expectation. That which was not gratified always resented the injury with a loud outcry, which put my mistress in a fury at me, and procured sugarplums to the child. I could not keep six children quiet, who were bribed to be clamorous; and was therefore dismissed, as a girl honest, but not good-natured.

I then lived with a couple that kept a petty shop of remnants and cheap linen. I was qualified to make a bill or keep a book; and being therefore often called, at a busy time, to serve the customers, expected that I should now be happy, in proportion as I was useful. But my mistress appropriated every day part of the profit to some private use, and, as she grew bolder in her theft, at last deducted such sums, that my master began to wonder how he sold so much, and gained so little. She pretended to assist his inquiries, and began, very gravely, to hope that *Betty was honest, and yet those sharp girls were apt to be light fingered.* You will believe that I did not stay there much longer.

The rest of my story I will tell you in another letter; and only beg to be informed in some paper, for which of my places, except perhaps the last, I was disqualified by my skill in reading and writing.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

BETTY BROOM.

No. 27.] SATURDAY, OCT. 21, 1758.

IT has been the endeavour of all those whom the world has reverenced for superior wisdom, to persuade man to be acquainted with himself, to learn his own powers and his own weakness, to observe by what evils he is most dangerously beset, and by what temptations most easily overcome.

This counsel has been often given with scrious dignity, and often received with appearanco of conviction; but, as very few can search deep into their own minds without meeting what they wish to hide from themselves, scarcely any man persists in cultivating such disagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his passions and appetites as he found them, and advises others to look into themselves.

This is the common result of inquiry even among those that endeavour to grow wiser or better; but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that swarm upon the earth have never been disturbed by such uneasy curiosity, but deliver themselves up to business or to pleasure, plunge into the current of life, whether placid or turbulent, and pass on from one point of prospect to another, attentive rather to any thing than the state of their minds; satisfied, at an easy rate, with an opinion, that they are no worse than others, that every man must mind his own interest, or that their pleasures hurt only themselves, and are therefore no proper subjects of censure

Some, however, there are, whom the intru

sion of scruples, tho recollection of better notions or the latent reprehension of good examples, will not suffer to live entirely contented with their own conduct; these are forced to pacify the mutiny of reason with fair promises, and quiet their thoughts with designs of calling all their actions to review, and planning a new scheme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we estimate so fallaciously as the force of our own resolutions, nor any fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has resolved a thousand times, and a thousand times deserted his own purpose, yet suffers no abatement of his confidence, but still believes himself his own master; and able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forward to his end through all the obstructions that inconveniences or delights can put in his way.

That this mistake should prevail for a time is very natural. When conviction is present, and temptation out of sight, we do not easily conceive how any reasonable being can deviate from his true interest. What ought to be done, while it yet hangs only in speculation, is so plain and certain, that there is no place for doubt; the whole soul yields itself to the predominance of truth, and readily determines to do what, when the time of action comes, will be at last omitted.

I believe most men may review all the lives that have past within their observation, without remembering one efficacious resolution, or being able to tell a single instance of a course of practice suddenly changed in consequence of a change of opinion, or an establishment of determination. Many, indeed, alter their conduct, and are not at fifty what they were at thirty; but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themselves, followed the train of external causes, and rather suffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promise and performance, between profession and reality, upon deep design and studied deceit; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocrisy in the world: we do not so often endeavour or wish to impose on others as on ourselves; we resolve to do right, we hope to keep our resolutions, we declare them to confirm our own hope, and fix our own inconstancy by calling witnesses of our actions; but at last habit prevails, and those, whom we invited to our triumph, laugh at our defeat.

Custom is commonly too strong for the most resolute resolver, though furnished for the assault with all the weapons of philosophy. "He that endeavours to free himself from an ill habit," says Bacon, "must not change too much at a time, lest he should be discouraged by difficulty; nor too little, for then he will make but slow advances." This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Those who have been able to conquer habit, are like those that are fabled to have returned from the realms of Pluto:

Pauci, quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, atque ardens evexit ad æthera virtus.

They are sufficient to give hope but not security; to animate the contest, but not to promise victory.

Those who are in the power of evil habits, must conquer them as they can; and conquered they must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be attained; but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom; they may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly resolve to conquer.

No. 28.] Saturday, Oct. 28, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

It is very easy for a man who sits idle at home, and has nobody to please but himself, to ridicule or to censure the common practices of mankind; and those who have no present temptation to break the rules of propriety, may applaud his judgment, and join in his merriment; but let the author or his readers mingle with common life, they will find themselves irresistibly borne away by the stream of custom, and must submit after they have laughed at others, to give others the same opportunity of laughing at them.

There is no paper published by the *Idler* which I have read with more approbation than that which censures the practice of recording vulgar marriages in the newspapers. I carried it about in my pocket, and read it to all those whom I suspected of having published their nuptials, or of being inclined to publish them, and sent transcripts of it to all the couples that transgressed your precepts for the next fortnight. I hoped that they were all vexed, and pleased myself with imagining their misery.

But short is the triumph of malignity. I was married last week to Miss Mohair, the daughter of a salesman; and, at my first appearance after the wedding night, was asked by my wife's mother whether I had sent our marriage to the Advertiser; I endeavoured to show how unfit it was to demand the attention of the public to our domestic affairs; but she told me with great vehemence, "That she would not have it thought to be a stolen match; that the blood of the Mohairs should never be disgraced; that her husband had served all the parish offices but one; that she had lived five-and-thirty years at the same house, and paid every body twenty shillings in the pound, and would have me know, though she was not as fine and as flaunting as Mrs. Gingham, the deputy's wife, she was not ashamed to tell her name, and would show her face with the best of them, and since I had married her daughter ——" At this instant entered my father-in-law, a grave man, from whom I expected succour: but upon hearing the case, he told me, "That it would be very imprudent to miss such an opportunity of advertising my shop; and that when notice was given of my marriage, many of my wife's friends would think themselves obliged to be my customers." I was

subdued by clamour on one side, and gravity on the other, and shall be obliged to tell the town that *three days ago Timothy Mushroon, an eminent oilman in Sea-Coal-lane, was married to Miss Polly Mohair, of Lothbury, a beautiful young lady with a large fortune.*

I am, Sir, &c.

Sir,

I am the unfortunate wife of the grocer whose letter you published about ten weeks ago, in which he complains like a sorry fellow, that I loiter in the shop with my needle-work in my hand, and that I oblige him to take me out on Sundays, and keep a girl to look after the child. Sweet Mr. Idler, if you did but know all, you would give no encouragement to such an unreasonable grumbler. I brought him three hundred pounds, which set him up in a shop, and bought in a stock, on which, with good management, we might live comfortably; but now I have given him a shop, I am forced to watch him and the shop too. I will tell you, Mr. Idler, how it is. There is an alehouse over the way, with a nine-pin alley, to which he is sure to run when I turn my back, and there he loses his money, for he plays at nine-pins as he does every thing else. While he is at this favourite sport, he sets a dirty boy to watch his door, and call him to his customers; but he is so long in coming, and so rude when he comes, that our custom falls off every day.

Those who cannot govern themselves, must be governed; I am resolved to keep him for the future behind his counter, and let him bounce at his customers if he dares. I cannot be above stairs and below at the same time, and have therefore taken a girl to look after the child, and dress the dinner; and, after all, pray who is to blame?

On a Sunday, it is true, I make him walk abroad, and sometimes carry the child;—I wonder who should carry it! But I never take him out till after church-time, nor would I do it then, but that if he is left alone, he will be upon the bed. On a Sunday, if he stays at home he has six meals; and, when he can eat no longer, has twenty stratagems to escape from me to the ale-house; but I commonly keep the door locked, till Monday produces something for him to do.

This is the true state of the case, and these are the provocations for which he has written his letter to you. I hope you will write a paper to show that if a wife must spend her whole time in watching her husband, she cannot conveniently tend her child, or sit at her needle.

I am, Sir, &c.

Sir,

There is in this town a species of oppression which the law has not hitherto prevented or redressed.

I am a chairman. You know, Sir, we come when we are called, and are expected to carry all who require our assistance. It is common for men of the most unwieldy corpulence to crowd themselves into a chair, and demand to be carried for a shilling as far as an airy young lady whom we scarcely feel upon our poles. Surely we ought to be paid like all other mortals, in proportion to our labour. Engines should be fixed in proper places to weigh chairs as they weigh wagons; and those, whom ease and plenty have made unable to carry themselves, should give part of their superfluities to those who carry them.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 29.] Saturday, Nov. 4, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have often observed that friends are lost by discontinuance of intercourse, without any offence on either part, and have long known, that it is more dangerous to be forgotten than to be blamed; I therefore make haste to send you the rest of my story, lest, by the delay of another fortnight, the name of Betty Broom might be no longer rememberd by you or your readers.

Having left the last place in haste, to avoid the charge or the suspicion of theft, I had not secured another service, and was forced to take a lodging in a back street. I had now got good clothes. The woman who lived in the garret opposite to mine was very officious, and offered to take care of my room and clean it, while I went round to my acquaintance to inquire for a mistress. I knew not why she was so kind, nor how I could recompense her; but in a few days I missed some of my linen, went to another lodging, and resolved not to have another friend in the next garret.

In six weeks I became under-maid at the house of a mercer in Cornhill, whose son was his apprentice. The young gentleman used to sit late at the tavern, without the knowledge of his father; and I was ordered by my mistress to let him in silently to his bed under the counter, and to be very careful to take away his candle. The hours which I was obliged to watch, whilst the rest of the family was in bed, I considered as supernumerary, and, having no business assigned for them, thought myself at liberty to spend them my own way: I kept myself awake with a book, and for some time liked my state the better for this opportunity of reading. At last, the upper-maid found my book, and showed it to my mistress, who told me, that wenches like me might spend their time better; that she never knew any of the readers that had good designs in their heads; that she could always find something else to do with her time, than to puzzle over books; and did not like that such a fine lady should sit up for her young master.

This was the first time that I found it thought criminal or dangerous to know how to read. I was dismissed decently, lest I should tell tales, and had a small gratuity above my wages.

I then lived with a gentlewoman of a small fortune. This was the only happy part of a my life. My mistress, for whom public diversions were too expensive, spent her time with books, and was pleased to find a maid who could partake her amusements. I rose early in the morning, that I might have time in the afternoon to read or listen, and was suffered to tell my opinion, or express my delight. Thus fifteen months stole away, in which I did not repine that I was born to servitude. But a burning fever seized my mistress, of whom I shall say no more, than that her servant wept upon her grave.

I had lived in a kind of luxury which made me very unfit for another place; and was rather too delicate for the conversation of a kitchen; so that when I was hired in the family of an East India director, my behaviour was so different, as they said, from that of a common servant, that they concluded me a gentlewoman in disguise, and turned me out in three weeks, on suspicion of some design which they could not comprehend.

I then fled for refuge to the other end of the town, where I hoped to find no obstruction from my new accomplishments, and was hired under the housekeeper in a splendid family. Here I was too wise for the maids, and too nice for the footman; yet I might have lived on without much uneasiness, had not my mistress, the housekeeper, who used to employ me in buying necessaries for the family, found a bill which I had made of one day's expense. I suppose it did not quite agree with her own book, for she fiercely declared her resolution, that there should be no pen and ink in that kitchen but her own.

She had the justice, or the prudence, not to injure my reputation; and I was easily admitted into another house in the neighbourhood, where my business was, to sweep the rooms and make the beds. Here I was for some time the favourite of Mrs. Simper, my lady's woman, who could not bear the vulgar girls, and was happy in the attendance of a young woman of some education. Mrs. Simper loved a novel, though she could not read hard words, and therefore when her lady was abroad, we always laid hold on her books. At last, my abilities became so much celebrated, that the housesteward used to employ me in keeping his accounts. Mrs. Simper then found out, that my sauciness was grown to such a height that nobody could endure it, and told my lady, that there had never been a room well swept since Betty Broom came into the house.

I was then hired by a consumptive lady, who wanted a maid that could read and write. I attended her four years, and though she was never pleased, yet when I declared my resolution to leave her, she burst into tears, and told me that I must bear the peevishness of a sick bed, and I should find myself remembered in her will. I complied, and a codicil was added in my favour; but in less than a week, when I set her gruel before her, I laid the spoon on the left side, and she threw her will into the fire. In two days she made another, which she burnt in the same manner, because she could not eat her chicken. A third was made, and destroyed because she heard a mouse within the wainscot, and was sure that I should suffer her to be carried away alive. After this I was for some time out of favour, but as her illness grew upon her, resentment and sullenness gave way to kinder sentiments. She died, and left me five hundred pounds; with this fortune I am going to settle in my native parish, where I resolve to spend some hours every day in teaching poor girls to read and write.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

BETTY BROOM.

No. 30.] SATURDAY, Nov. 11, 1758.

THE desires of man increase with his acquisitions; every step which he advances brings something within his view, which he did not see before, and which, as soon as he sees it, he begins to want. Where necessity ends, curiosity begins; and no sooner are we supplied with every thing that nature can demand, than we sit down to contrive artificial appetites.

By this restlessness of mind, every populous and wealthy city is filled with innumerable employments, for which the greater part of mankind is without a name; with artificers, whose labour is exerted in producing such petty conveniences, that many shops are furnished with instruments of which the use can hardly be found without inquiry, but which he that once knows them quickly learns to number among necessary things.

Such is the diligence with which, in countries completely civilized, one part of mankind labours for another, that wants are supplied faster than they can be formed, and the idle and luxurious find life stagnate for want of some desire to keep it in motion. This species of distress furnishes a new set of occupations; and multitudes are busied from day to day, in finding the rich and the fortunate something to do.

It is very common to reproach those artists as useless, who produce only such superfluities as neither accommodate the body, nor improve the mind; and of which no other effect can be imagined, than that they are the occasions of spending money and consuming time.

But this censure will be mitigated when it is seriously considered that money and time are the heaviest burdens of life, and that the unhappiest of all mortals are those who have more of either than they know how to use. To set himself free from these incumbrances, one hurries to Newmarket; another travels over Europe; one pulls down his house and calls architects about him; another buys a seat in the country, and follows his hounds over hedges and through rivers; one makes collections of shells; and another searches the world for tulips and carnations.

He is surely a public benefactor who finds employment for those to whom it is thus difficult to find it for themselves. It is true, that this is seldom done merely from generosity or

compassion; almost every man seeks his own advantage in helping others, and therefore it is too common for mercenary officiousness to consider rather what is grateful, than what is right.

We all know that it is more profitable to be loved than esteemed; and ministers of pleasure will always be found, who study to make themselves necessary, and to supplant those who are practising the same arts.

One of the amusements of idleness is reading without the fatigue of close attention; and the world, therefore, swarms with writers whose wish is not to be studied, but to be read.

No species of literary men has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one gazette; but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian, who regularly circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villages of his district with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true interests of Europe.

To write news in its perfection requires such a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the task is not always to be found. In Sir Henry Wotton's jocular definition, *An ambassador* is said to be *a man of virtue sent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country*; a newswriter is *a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit.* To these compositions is required neither genius nor knowledge, neither industry nor sprightliness; but contempt of shame, and indifference to truth, are absolutely necessary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained these qualities, may confidently tell to-day what he intends to contradict to-morrow; he may affirm fearlessly what he knows that he shall be obliged to recant, and may write letters from Amsterdam or Dresden to himself.

In a time of war the nation is always of one mind, eager to hear something good of themselves, and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news-writers is easy; they have nothing to do but to tell that the battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarcely any thing awakens attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins; and if the scene of action be somewhat distant, scalps half the inhabitants of a province.

Among the calamities of war, may be justly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates, and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relator of wars destitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from streets filled with soldiers accustomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with scribblers accustomed to lie.

No. 31.] Saturday, Nov. 18, 1758.

Many moralists have remarked, that pride has of all human vices the widest dominion, appears in the greatest multiplicity of forms, and lies hid under the greatest variety of disguises; of disguises which, like the moon's *veil of brightness*, are both its *lustre and its shade*, and betray it to others, though they hide it from ourselves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from this pre-eminence of mischief; yet I know not whether idleness may not maintain a very doubtful and obstinate competition.

There are some that profess idleness in its full dignity, who call themselves the *Idle* as Busiris in the play calls himself the *Proud;* who boast that they can do nothing, and thank their stars that they have nothing to do; who sleep every night till they can sleep no longer, and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again; who prolong the reign of darkness by double curtains; and never see the sun but to *tell him how they hate his beams;* whose whole labour is to vary the posture of indulgence, and whose day differs from their night but as a couch or chair differs from a bed.

These are the true and open votaries of idleness, for whom she weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceased to live, and at whose death the survivors can only say that they have ceased to breathe.

But idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected; for, being a vice which terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others; and it is therefore not watched like fraud, which endangers property; or like pride, which naturally seeks its gratifications in another's inferiority. Idleness is a silent and peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore nobody is busy to censure or detect it.

As pride sometimes is hid under humility, idleness is often covered by turbulence and hurry. He that neglects his known duty and real employment, naturally endeavours to crowd his mind with something that may bar out the remembrance of his own folly, and does any thing but what he ought to do with eager diligence, that he may keep himself in his own favour.

Some are always in a state of preparation, occupied in previous measures, forming plans, accumulating materials, and providing for the main affair. These are certainly under the secret power of idleness. Nothing is to be expected from the workman whose tools are for ever to be sought. I was once told by a great master that no man ever excelled in painting, who was eminently curious about pencils and colours.

There are others to whom idleness dictates another expedient, by which life may be passed unprofitably away without the tediousness of many vacant hours. The art is, to fill the day with petty business, to have always something

in hand which may raise curiosity, but not solicitude, and keep the mind in a state of action, but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practised by my old friend Sober with wonderful success. Sober is a man of strong desires and quick imagination, so exactly balanced by the love of ease, that they can seldom stimulate him to any difficult undertaking; they have, however, so much power, that they will not suffer him to lie quite at rest; and though they do not make him sufficiently useful to others, they make him at least weary of himself.

Mr. Sober's chief pleasure is conversation; there is no end of his talk or his attention; to speak or to hear is equally pleasing; for he still fancies that he is teaching or learning something, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he must go home, that his friends may sleep; and another time in the morning, when all the world agrees to shut out interruption. These are the moments of which poor Sober trembles at the thought. But the misery of these irksome intervals he has many means of alleviating. He has persuaded himself that the manual arts are undeservedly overlooked; he has observed in many trades the effects of close thought, and just ratiocination. From speculation he proceeded to practice, and supplied himself with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coalbox very successfully, and which he still continues to employ, as he finds occasion.

He has attempted at other times the crafts of shoe-maker, tinman, plumber, and potter; in all these arts he has failed, and resolves to qualify himself for them, by better information. But his daily amusement is chemistry. He has a small furnace which he employs in distillation, and which has long been the solace of his life. He draws oils and waters and essences and spirits, which he knows to be of no use, sits and counts the drops as they come from his retort, and forgets that whilst a drop is falling, a moment flies away.

Poor Sober! I have often teased him with reproof, and he has often promised reformation; for no man is so much open to conviction as the *Idler*, but there is none on which it operates so little. What will be the effect of this paper I know not; perhaps he will read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace; but my hope is that he will quit his trifles, and betake himself to rational and useful diligence.

No. 32.] Saturday, Nov. 25, 1758.

Among the innumerable mortifications that waylay human arrogance on every side, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the most common objects and effects a defect of which we become more sensible, by every attempt to supply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with knowledge, and conceive themselves informed of the whole nature of things, when they are shown their form or told their use; but the speculatist, who is not content with superficial views, harrasses himself with fruitless curiosity, and still as he acquires more, perceives only that he knows less.

Sleep is a state in which a great part of every life is passed. No animal has yet been discovered, whose existence is not varied with intervals of insensibility; and some late philosophers have extended the empire of sleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, so frequent, so great, so general, and so necessary, no searcher has yet found either the efficient or final cause; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irresistible stupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate suspension of its active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this subject, Nature has taken sufficient care that theory shall have little influence on practice. The most diligent inquirer is not able long to keep his eyes open; the most eager disputant will begin about midnight to desert his argument; and once in four-and-twenty hours, the gay and the gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous and the silent, the busy and the idle, are all overpowered by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equality of sleep.

Philosophy has often attempted to repress insolence, by asserting that all conditions are levelled by death; a position which, however it may deject the happy, will seldom afford much comfort to the wretched. It is far more pleasing to consider, that sleep is equally a leveller with death; that the time is never at a great distance, when the balm of rest shall be diffused alike upon every head, when the diversities of life shall stop their operation, and the high and low shall lie down together.

It is somewhere recorded of Alexander, that in the pride of conquests, and intoxication of flattery, he declared that he only perceived himself to be a man by the necessity of sleep. Whether he considered sleep as necessary to his mind or body it was indeed a sufficient evidence of human infirmity; the body which required such frequency of renovation, gave but faint promises of immortality; and the mind which from time to time, sunk gladly into insensibility, had made no very near approaches to the felicity of the supreme and self-sufficient nature.

I know not what can tend more to repress all the passions that disturb the peace of the world, than the consideration that there is no height of happiness or honour from which man does not eagerly descend to a state of unconscious repose; that the best condition of life is such, that we contentedly quit its good to be disentangled from its evils; that in a few hours splendour fades before the eye, and praise itself deadens in the ear; the senses withdraw from their objects, and reason favours the retreat.

What then are the hopes and prospects of covetousness, ambition, and rapacity? Let him that desires most have all his desires gratified, he never shall attain a state which he can for a day and a night contemplate with satisfaction, or from which, if he had the power of perpetual vigilance, he would not long for periodical separations

All envy would be extinguished, if it were universally known that there are none to be envied, and surely none can be much envied who are not pleased with themselves. There is reason to suspect, that the distinctions of mankind have more show than value, when it is found that all agree to be weary alike of pleasures and of cares; that the powerful and the weak, the celebrated and obscure, join in one common wish, and implore from nature's hand the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our desire of abstraction from ourselves, that very few are satisfied with the quantity of stupefaction which the needs of the body force upon the mind. Alexander himself added intemperance to sleep, and solaced with the fumes of wine the sovereignty of the world; and almost every man has some art by which he steals his thoughts away from his present state.

It is not much of life that is spent in close attention to any important duty. Many hours of every day are suffered to fly away without any traces left upon the intellects. We suffer phantoms to rise up before us, and amuse ourselves with the dance of airy images, which, after a time, we dismiss forever, and know not how we have been busied.

Many have no happier moments than those that they pass in solitude, abandoned to their own imagination, which sometimes puts sceptres in their hand or mitres on their heads, shifts the scene of pleasure with endless variety, bids all the forms of beauty sparkle before them, and gluts them with every change of visionary luxury.

It is easy in these semi-slumbers to collect all the possibilities of happiness, to alter the course of the sun, to bring back the past, and anticipate the future, to unite all the beauties of all seasons, and all the blessings of all climates, to receive and bestow felicity, and forget that misery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary recession from the realities of life to airy fiction; an habitual subjection of reason to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuse themselves by a perpetual succession of companions; but the difference is not great: in solitude we have our dreams to ourselves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end sought in both is, forgetfulness of ourselves.

No. 33.] Saturday, Dec. 2, 1758.

[I hope the author of the following letter will excuse the omission of some parts, and allow me to remark, that the Journal of the Citizen in the Spectator has almost precluded the attempt of any future writer.]

———*Non ita Romuli*
Præscriptum, & intonsi Catonis
Auspiciis, veterumque norma. HOR.

Sir,

You have often solicited correspondence. I have sent you the Journal of a Senior Fellow, or Genuine *Idler*, just transmitted from Cambridge by a facetious correspondent, and warranted to have been transcribed from the common-place book of the journalist.

Monday, nine o'clock. Turned off my bedmaker for waking me at night. Weather rainy. Consulted my weather-glass. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

Ditto, ten. After breakfast transcribed half a sermon from Dr. Hickman. N. B. Never to transcribe any more from Calamy; Mrs. Pilcocks, at my curacy, having one volume of that author lying in her parlour-window.

Ditto, eleven. Went down into my cellar, Mem. My *mountain* will be fit to drink in a month's time. N. B. To remove the five year old port into the new bin on the left hand.

Ditto, twelve. Mended a pen. Looked at my weather-glass again. Quicksilver very low. Shaved. Barber's hand shakes.

Ditto, one. Dined alone in my room on a soal. N. B. The shrimp-sauce not so good as Mr. H. of Peterhouse and I used to eat in London last winter, at the Mitre in Fleet-street. Sat down to a pint of Madeira. Mr. H. surprised me over it. We finished two bottles of port together, and were very cheerful. Mem. To dine with Mr. H. at Peterhouse next Wednesday. One of the dishes a leg of pork and pease, by my desire.

Ditto, six. Newspaper in the common room.

Ditto, seven. Returned to my room. Made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine; did not fall asleep till ten, a young fellow-commoner being very noisy over my head.

Tuesday, nine. Rose squeamish. A fine morning. Weather-glass very high.

Ditto, ten. Ordered my horse, and rode to the five-mile stone on the Newmarket road. Appetite gets better. A pack of hounds in full cry crossed the road, and startled my horse.

Ditto, twelve. Dressed. Found a letter on my table to be in London the 19th inst. Bespoke a new wig.

Ditto, one. At dinner in the hall. Too much water in the soup. Dr. Dry always orders the beef to be salted too much for me.

Ditto, two. In the common-room. Dr. Dry gave us an instance of a gentleman who kept the gout out of his stomach by drinking old Madeira. Conversation chiefly on the expeditions. Company broke up at four. Dr. Dry and myself played at back-gammon for a brace of snipes. Won.

Ditto, five. At the coffee-house. Met Mr. H. there. Could not get a sight of the Monitor.

Ditto, seven. Returned home, and stirred my fire. Went to the common-room, and supped on the snipes with Dr. Dry.

Ditto, eight. Began the evening in the common-room. Dr. Dry told several stories. Were very merry. Our new fellow that studie physic, very talkative toward twelve. Pretends he will bring the youngest Miss—— to drink tea with me soon. Impertinent blockhead!

Wednesday, nine. Alarmed with a pain in my ankle. Q. The gout? Fear I can't dine

at Peterhouse ; but hope a ride will set all to rights. Weather-glass below *fair*.

Ditto, ten. Mounted my horse, thought the weather suspicious. Pain in my ankle entirely gone. Catched in a shower coming back. Convinced that my weather-glass is the best in Cambridge.

Ditto, twelve. Dressed. Sauntered up to the Fishmonger's-hill. Met Mr. H. and went with him to Peterhouse. Cook made us wait thirty-six minutes beyond the time. The company; some of my Emanuel friends. For dinner, a pair of soals, a leg of pork and peas among other things. Mem. Peas-pudding not boiled enough. Cook reprimanded and sconced in my presence.

Ditto, after dinner. Pain in my ankle returns. Dull all the afternoon. Rallied for being no company. Mr. H.'s account of the accommodations on the road in his Bath journey.

Ditto, six. Got into spirits. Never was more chatty. We sat late at whist. Mr. H. and self agreed at parting to take a gentle ride, and dine at the old house on the London road to-morrow.

Thursday, nine. My semptress. She has lost the measure of my wrist. Forced to be measured again. The baggage has got a trick of smiling.

Ditto, ten to eleven. Made some rappee-snuff. Read the magazines. Received a present of pickles from Miss Pilcocks. Mem. To send in return some collared eel, which I know both the old lady and miss are fond of.

Ditto, eleven. Glass very high. Mounted at the gate with Mr. H. Horse skittish and wants exercise. Arrive at the old house. All the provision bespoke by some rakish fellow-commoner in the next room, who had been on a scheme to Newmarket. Could get nothing but mutton chops off the worst end. Port very new. Agree to try some other house to-morrow.

Here the Journal breaks off: for the next morning, as my friend informs me, our genial academic was waked with a severe fit of the gout; and, at present, enjoys all the dignity of that disease. But I believe we have lost nothing by this interruption; since a continuation of the remainder of the Journal, through the remainder of the week, would most probably have exhibited nothing more than a repeated relation of the same circumstances of idling and luxury.

I hope it will not be concluded, from this specimen of academic life, that I have attempted to decry our universities. If literature is not the essential requisite of the modern academic, I am yet persuaded that Cambridge and Oxford, however degenerated, surpass the fashionable academies of our metropolis, and the gymnasia of foreign countries. The number of learned persons in these celebrated seats is still considerable, and more conveniences and opportunities for study still subsist in them, than in any other place. There is at least one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the Genius of the place. It is a sort of inspiring deity, which every youth of quick sensibility and ingenious disposition creates to himself, by reflecting, that he is placed under those venerable walls, where a Hooker and a Hammond, a Bacon and a Newton, once pursued the same course of science, and from whence they soared to the most elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which Tully, according to his own testimony, experienced at Athens, when he contemplated the porticos where Socrates sat, and the laurel groves where Plato disputed. But there are other circumstances, and of the highest importance, which render our college superior to all other places of education. Their institutions, although somewhat fallen from their primæval simplicity, are such as influence, in a particular manner, the moral conduct of their youth; and in this general depravity of manners and laxity of principles, pure religion is no where more strongly inculcated. The academies, as they are presumptuously styled, are too low to be mentioned: and foreign seminaries are likely to prejudice the unwary mind with Calvinism. But English universities render their students virtuous, at least by excluding all opportunities of vice: and, by teaching them the principles of the church of England, confirm them in those of true Christianity.

No. 34.] Saturday, Dec. 9, 1758.

To illustrate one thing by its resemblance to another, has been always the most popular and efficacious art of instruction, there is, indeed, no other method of teaching that of which any one is ignorant, but by means of something already known; and a mind so enlarged by contemplation and inquiry, that it has always many objects within its view, will seldom be long without some near and familiar image through which an easy transition may be made to truths more distant and obscure.

Of the parallels which have been drawn by wit and curiosity, some are literal and real, as between poetry and painting, two arts which pursue the same end, by the operation of the same mental faculties, and which differ only as the one represents things by marks permanent and natural, the other by signs accidental and arbitrary. The one therefore is more easily and generally understood, since similitude of form is immediately perceived; the other is capable of conveying more ideas; for men have thought and spoken of many things which they do not see.

Other parallels are fortuitous and fanciful, yet these have sometimes been extended to many particulars of resemblance by a lucky concurrence of diligence and chance. The animal body is composed of many members, united under the direction of one mind; any number of individuals, connected for some common purpose, is therefore called a body. From his participation of the same appellation arose the comparison of the body natural and body politic, of which, how far soever it has been deduced, no end has hitherto been found.

In these imaginary similitudes, the same word is used at once in its primitive and metaphorical sense. Thus health, ascribed to the body natural, is opposed to sickness; but attributed to the body politic stands as contrary to adversity. These parallels, therefore, have more of genius, but less of truth; they often please, but they never convince.

Of this kind is a curious speculation frequently indulged by a philosopher of my acquaintance, who had discovered, the qualities requisite to conversation are very exactly represented by a bowl of punch.

Punch, says this profound investigator, is a liquor compounded of spirit and acid juices, sugar and water. The spirit, volatile and fiery, is the proper emblem of vivacity and wit; the acidity of the lemon will very aptly figure pungency of raillery, and acrimony of censure; sugar is the natural representative of luscious adulation and gentle complaisance; and water is the proper hieroglyphic of easy prattle, innocent and tasteless.

Spirit alone is too powerful for use. It will produce madness rather than merriment; and instead of quenching thirst will inflame the blood. Thus wit, too copiously poured out, agitates the hearer with emotions rather violent than pleasing; every one shrinks from the force of its oppression, the company sits entranced and overpowered; all are astonished but nobody is pleased.

The acid juices give this genial liquor all its power of stimulating the palate. Conversation would become dull and vapid, if negligence were not sometimes roused, and sluggishness quickened by due severity of reprehension. But acids unmixed will distort the face and torture the palate; and he that has no other qualities than penetration and aspersity, he whose constant employment is detection and censure, who looks only to find faults, and speaks only to publish them, will soon be dreaded, hated, and avoided.

The taste of sugar is generally pleasing, but it cannot long be eaten by itself. Thus meekness and courtesy will always recommend the first address, but soon pall and nauseate, unless they are associated with more sprightly qualities. The chief use of sugar is to temper the taste of other substances; and softness of behaviour in the same manner mitigates the roughness of contradiction, and allays the bitterness of unwelcome truth.

Water is the universal vehicle by which are conveyed the particles necessary to sustenance and growth, by which thirst is quenched, and all the wants of life and nature are supplied. Thus all the business of the world is transacted by artless and easy talk, neither sublimed by fancy, nor discoloured by affectation, without either the harshness of satire, or the lusciousness of flattery. By this limpid vein of language, curiosity is gratified, and all the knowledge is conveyed which one man is required to impart for the safety or convenience of another. Water is the only ingredient in punch which can be used alone, and with which man is content till fancy has framed an artificial want. Thus while we only desire to have our ignorance informed we are most delighted with the plainest diction; and it is only in the moments of idleness or pride, that we call for the gratifications of wit or flattery.

He only will please long, who by tempering the acidity of satire with the sugar of civility, and allaying the heat of wit with the frigidity of humble chat, can make the true punch of conversation; and as that punch can be drank in the greatest quantity which has the largest proportion of water, so that companion will be oftenest welcome, whose talk flows out with inoffensive copiousness, and unenvied insipidity.

No. 35.] Saturday, Dec. 16, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Mr. Idler,

If it be difficult to persuade the idle to be busy, it is likewise, as experience has taught me, not easy to convince the busy that it is better to be idle. When you shall despair of stimulating sluggishness to motion, I hope you will turn your thoughts towards the means of stilling the bustle of pernicious activity.

I am the unfortunate husband of a *buyer of bargains*. My wife has somewhere heard that a good housewife *never* has any thing to *purchase when it is wanted*. This maxim is often in her mouth, and always in her head. She is not one of those philosophical talkers that speculate without practice, and learn sentences of wisdom only to repeat them; she is always making additions to her stores; she never looks into a broker's shop but she spies something that may be wanted some time; and it is impossible to make her pass the door of a house where she hears *goods selling by auction*.

Whatever she thinks cheap she holds it the duty of an economist to buy; in consequence of this maxim, we are encumbered on every side with useless lumber. The servants can scarcely creep to their beds through the chests and boxes that surround them. The carpenter is employed once a week in building closets, fixing cupboards, and fastening shelves; and my house has the appearance of a ship stored for a voyage to the colonies.

I had often observed that advertisements set her on fire; and therefore pretending to emulate her laudable frugality, I forbade the newspaper to be taken any longer; but my precaution is vain; I know not by what fatality, or by what confederacy, every catalogue of *genuine furniture* comes to her hand, every advertisement of a newspaper newly opened is in her pocket-book, and she knows before any of her neighbours when the stock of any man *leaving off trade* is to be *sold cheap for ready money*.

Such intelligence is to my dear one the Siren's song. No engagement, no duty, no interest, can withhold her from a sale, from which she always returns congatulating herself upon her dexterity at a bargain; the porter lays down his burden in the hall; she dis-

plays her new acquisitions, and spends the rest of the day in contriving where they shall be put.

As she cannot bear to have any thing incomplete, one purchase necessitates another; she has twenty feather-beds more than she can use, and a late sale has supplied her with a proportionable number of Witney blankets, a large roll of linen for sheets, and five quilts for every bed, which she bought because the seller told her, that if she would clear his hands he would let her have a bargain.

Thus by hourly encroachments my habitation is made narrower and narrower; the dining-room is so crowded with tables, that dinner scarcely can be served; the parlour is decorated with so many piles of china, that I dare not step within the door; at every turn of the stairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened that shelves may be set before them.

This, however, might be borne, if she would gratify her own inclinations without opposing mine. But I, who am idle, am luxurious, and she condemns me to live upon salt provision. She knows the loss of buying in small quantities, we have therefore whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away because it is spoiled, but she persists in her system, and will never buy any thing by single pennyworths.

The common vice of those who are still grasping at more, is to neglect that which they already possess; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef should be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the second bag of peas should not be opened till the first were eaten; that every feather-bed shall be lain on in its turn; that the carpets should be taken out of the chests once a month and brushed; and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily inquiring after the best traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always scented by fumigations to destroy the moths. She employs a workman from time to time to adjust six clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that rust in the garret; and a woman in the next alley that lives by scouring the brass and pewter which are only laid up to tarnish again.

She is always imagining some distant time in which she shall use whatever she accumulates; she has four looking-glasses which she cannot hang up in her house, but which will be handsome in more lofty rooms; and pays rent for the place of a vast copper in some warehouse, because when we live in the country we shall brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, but I know not how to change it; all the married men whom I consult advise me to have patience; but some old bachelors are of opinion, that since she loves sales so well, she should have a sale of her own; and I have, I think resolved to open her hoards, and advertise an auction.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant.

PETER PLENTY.

No. 36.] SATURDAY, DEC. 23, 1758.

THE great differences that disturb the peace of mankind are not about ends, but means. We have all the same general desires, but how those desires shall be accomplished will for ever be disputed. The ultimate purpose of government is temporal, and that of religion is eternal happiness. Hitherto we agree; but here we must part to try according to the endless varieties of passion and understanding combined with one another, every possible form of government, and every imaginable tenet of religion.

We are told by Cumberland that rectitude, applied to action or contemplation, is merely metaphorical; and that as a right line describes the shortest passage from point to point, so a right action effects a good design by the fewest means; and so likewise a right opinion is that which connects distant truths by the shortest train of intermediate propositions.

To find the nearest way from truth to truth, or from purpose to effect, not to use more instruments where fewer will be sufficient, not to move by wheels and levers what will give way to the naked hand, is the great proof of a healthful and vigorous mind, neither feeble with healthful ignorance, nor overburdened with unwieldy knowledge.

But there are men who seem to think nothing so much the characteristic of a genius, as to do common things in an uncommon manner; like Hudibras, to tell the clock by algebra; or like the lady in Dr. Young's satires, to drink tea by stratagem; to quit the beaten track only because it is known, and take a new path how ever crooked or rough because the straight was found out before.

Every man speaks and writes with intent to be understood; and it can seldom happen but he that understands himself might convey his notions to another, if, content to be understood, he did not seek to be admired; but when once he begins to contrive how his sentiments may be received, not with most ease to his reader, but with most advantage to himself, he then transfers his consideration from words to sounds, from sentences to periods, and as he grows more elegant becomes less intelligible.

It is difficult to enumerate every species of authors whose labours counteract themselves; the man of exuberance and copiousness, who diffuses every thought through so many diversities of expression, that it is lost like water in a mist; the ponderous dictator of sentences, whose notions are delivered in the lump, and are like uncoined bullion, of more weight than use; the liberal illustrator, who shows by examples and comparisons what was clearly seen when it was first proposed; and the stately son of demonstration, who proves with mathematical formality what no man has yet pretended to doubt.

There is a mode of style for which I know not that the masters of oratory have yet found a name; a style by which the most evident truths are so obscured, that they can no longer be perceived, and the most familiar proposi-

tions so disguised that they cannot be known. Every other kind of eloquence is the dress of sense; but this is the mask by which a true master of his art will so effectually conceal it, that a man will as easily mistake his own positions, if he meets them thus transformed, as he may pass in a masquerade his nearest acquaintance.

This style may be called the terrific, for its chief intention is to terrify and amaze; it may be termed the repulsive, for its natural effect is to drive away the reader; or it may be distinguished, in plain English, by the denomination of the bugbear style, for it has more terror than danger, and will appear less formidable as it is more nearly approached.

A mother tells her infant that two and two make four; the child remembers the proposition, and is able to count four to all the purposes of life, till the course of his education brings him among philosophers who fright him from his former knowledge, by telling him, that four is a certain aggregate of units; that all numbers being only the repetition of an unit, which, though not a number itself, is the parent, root, or original of all number, four is the denomination assigned to a certain number of such repetitions. The only danger is, lest, when he first hears these dreadful sounds, the pupil should run away; if he has but the courage to stay till the conclusion, he will find that when speculation has done its worst, two and two still make four.

An illustrious example of this species of eloquence may be found in Letters concerning Mind. The author begins by declaring, that "the sorts of things are things that now are, have been, and shall be, and the things that strictly are." In this position, except the last clause, in which he uses something of the scholastic language, there is nothing but what every man has heard and imagines himself to know. But who would not believe that some wonderful novelty is presented to his intellect when he is afterwards told, in the true bugbear style, that "the *ares*, in the former sense, are things that lie between the *have-beens* and the *shall-bes*. The *have-beens* are things that are past; the *shall-bes* are things that are to come; and the things that *are*, in the latter sense, are things that have not been, nor shall be, nor stand in the midst of such as are before them, or shall be after them. The things that have been, and shall be, have respect to present, past, and future. Those likewise that now *are* have moreover place; that, for instance, which is here, that which is to the east, that which is to the west."

All this, my dear reader, is very strange; but though it be strange, it is not new; survey these wonderful sentences again, and they will be found to contain nothing more, than very plain truths, which till this author arose had always been delivered in plain language.

No. 37.] SATURDAY, DEC. 30, 1758.

THOSE who are skilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare, that iron is every where to be found; and that not only its proper ore is copiously treasured in the caverns of the earth, but that its particles are dispersed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the universe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greatest plenty, which the condition of life makes of greatest use; and that nothing is penuriously imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal distribution, or more easy acquisition, would increase real and rational felicity.

Iron is common, and gold is rare. Iron contributes so much to supply the wants of nature, that its use constitutes much of the difference between savage and polished life, between the state of him that slumbers in European palaces, and him that shelters himself in the cavities of a rock from the chillness of the night, or the violence of the storm. Gold can never be hardened into saws or axes; it can neither furnish instruments of manufacture, utensils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; its only quality is to shine, and the value of its lustre arises from its scarcity.

Throughout the whole circle, both of natural and moral life, necessaries are as iron, and superfluities as gold. What we really need we may readily obtain; so readily that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonness of abundance, confounded natural with artificial desires, and invented necessities for the sake of employment, because the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is sustained with so little labour, that the tediousness of idle time cannot otherwise be supported.

Thus plenty is the original cause of many of our needs; and even the poverty, which is so frequent and distressful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want necessaries; but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities.

When Socrates passed through shops of toys and ornaments, he cried out, *How many things are here which I do not need!* And the same exclamation may every man make who surveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dress food for the stomach is easy, the art is to irritate the palate when the stomach is sufficed A rude hand may build walls, form roofs, and lay floors, and provide all that warmth and security require; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice, or to paint the ceilings. Such dress as may enable the body to endure the different seasons, the most unenlightened nations have been able to procure: but the work of science begins in the ambition of distinction, in variations of fashion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with easy culture; the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavours of fruits, and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, those parts are most easy which are generally necessary. The intercourse of society is maintained without the elegances

of language. Figures, criticisms, and refinements, are the work of those whom idleness makes weary of themselves. The commerce of the world is carried on by easy methods of computation. Subtility and study are required only when questions are invented merely to puzzle, and calculations are extended to show the skill of the calculator. The light of the sun is equally beneficial to him whose eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whose reason persuades him that it stands still; and plants grow with the same luxuriance, whether we suppose earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raise our thoughts to nobler inquiries, we shall still find facility concurring with usefulness. No man needs stay to be virtuous till the moralists have determined the essence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by its proximate consequences, though the general and ultimate reason should never be discovered. Religion may regulate the life of him to whom the Scotists and Thomists are alike unknown; and the assertors of fate and free-will, however different in their talk, agree to act in the same manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate the politer arts or abstruser studies. That curiosity which always succeeds ease and plenty, was undoubtedly given us as a proof of capacity which our present state is not able to fill, as a preparative for some better mode of existence, which shall furnish employment for the whole soul, and where pleasure shall be adequate to our powers of fruition. In the mean time let us gratefully acknowledge that Goodness which grants us ease at a cheap rate, which changes the seasons where the nature of heat and cold has not been yet examined, and gives the vicissitudes of day and night to those who never marked the tropics, or numbered the constellations.

No. 38.] Saturday, Jan. 6, 1759.

Since the publication of the letter concerning the condition of those who are confined in goals by their creditors, an inquiry is said to have been made, by which it appears that more than twenty thousand* are at this time prisoners for debt.

We often look with indifference on the successive parts of that, which, if the whole were seen together, would shake us with emotion. A debtor is dragged to prison, pitied for a moment, and then forgotten; another follows him, and is lost alike in the caverns of oblivion; but when the whole mass of calamity rises up at once, when twenty thousand reasonable beings, are heard all groaning in unnecessary misery, not by the infirmity of nature, but the mistake or negligence of policy, who can forbear to pity and lament, to wonder and abhor!

There is here no need of declamatory vehemence: we live in an age of commerce and computation; let us therefore coolly inquire what is the sum of evil which the imprisonment of debtors brings upon our country.

It seems to be the opinion of the later computists, that the inhabitants of England do not exceed six millions, of which twenty thousand is the three hundredth part. What shall we say of the humanity or the wisdom of a nation, that voluntarily sacrifices one in every three hundred to lingering destruction!

The misfortunes of an individual do not extend their influence to many; yet if we consider the effects of consanguinity and friendship, and the general reciprocation of wants and benefits, which make one man dear or necessary to another, it may reasonably be supposed, that every man languishing in prison gives trouble of some kind to two others who love or need him. By this multiplication of misery we see distress extended to the hundredth part of the whole society.

If we estimate at a shilling a day what is lost by the inaction and consumed in the support of each man thus chained down to involuntary idleness, the public loss will rise in one year to three hundred thousand pounds; in ten years to more than a sixth part of our circulating coin.

I am afraid that those who are best acquainted with the state of our prisons will confess that my conjecture is too near the truth, when I suppose that the corrosion of resentment, the heaviness of sorrow, the corruption of confined air, the want of exercise, and sometimes of food, the contagion of diseases, from which there is no retreat, and the severity of tyrants, against whom there can be no resistance, and all the complicated horrors of a prison, put an end every year to the life of one in four of those that are shut up from the common comforts of human life.

Thus perish yearly five thousand men, overborne with sorrow, consumed by famine, or putrified by filth: many of them in the most vigorous and useful part of life; for the thoughtless and imprudent are commonly young, and the active and busy are seldom old.

According to the rule generally received, which supposes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be said to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed till now, that of every English generation, a hundred and fifty thousand perish in our gaols! that in every century, a nation eminent for science, studious of commerce, ambitious of empire, should willingly lose, in noisome dungeons, five hundred thousand of its inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been destroyed in the same time by the pestilence and sword!

A very late occurrence may show us the value of the number which we thus condemn to be useless; in the re-establishment of the trained bands, thirty thousand are considered as a force sufficient against all exigencies. While, therefore, we detain twenty thousand in prison, we shut up in darkness and uselessness two-thirds of an army which ourselves judge equal to the defence of our country.

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* This number was at that time confidently published, but the author has since found reason to question the calculation.

The monastic institutions have been often blamed as tending to retard the increase of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to those whose employment is consistent with abstraction, and who, though solitary, will not be idle: to those whom infirmity makes useless to the commonwealth, or to those who have paid their due proportion to society, and who, having lived for others, may be honourably dismissed to live for themselves. But whatever be the evil or the folly of these retreats, those have no right to censure them whose prisons contain greater numbers than the monasteries of other countries. It is, surely, less foolish and less criminal to permit inaction than compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happiness, than condemn to certain and apparent misery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedness.

The misery of gaols is not half their evil: they are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedness can generate between them; with all the shameless and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of despair. In a prison, the awe of the public eye is lost, and the power of the law is spent; there are few fears, there are no blushes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himself as he can against his own sensibility, endeavours to practise on others the arts which are practised on himself; and gains the kindness of his associates by similitude of manners.

Thus some sink amidst their misery, and others survive only to propagate villany. It may be hoped, that our lawgivers will at length take away from us this power of starving and depraving one another; but, if there be any reason why this inveterate evil should not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let those, whose writings from the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to transfer the reproach of such imprisonment from the debtor to the creditor, till universal infamy shall pursue the wretch whose wantonness of power, or revenge of disappointment, condemns another to torture and to ruin; till he shall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no shelter from contempt.

Surely, he whose debtor has perished in prison, although he may acquit himself of deliberate murder, must at least have his mind clouded with discontent, when he considers how much another has suffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bewailing her husband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any made so obdurate by avarice or cruelty, as to revolve these consequences without dread or pity, I must leave them to be awakened by some other power, for I write only to human beings.

No. 39.] SATURDAY, JAN. 18, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

As none look more diligently about them than those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing, I suppose it has not escaped your observation, that the bracelet, an ornament of great antiquity, has been for some years revived among the English ladies.

The genius of our nation is said, I know not for what reason, to appear rather an improvement than invention. The bracelet was known in the earliest ages; but it was formerly only a hoop of gold, or a cluster of jewels, and showed nothing but the wealth or vanity of the wearer; till our ladies, by carrying pictures on their wrists, made their ornaments works of fancy and exercises of judgment.

This addition of art to luxury is one of the innumerable proofs that might be given of the late increase of female erudition; and I have often congratulated myself that my life has happened at a time when those, on whom so much of human felicity depends, have learned to think as well as speak, and when respect takes possession of the ear, while love is entering at the eye.

I have observed, that even by the suffrages of their own sex, those ladies are accounted wisest who do not yet disdain to be taught; and therefore, I shall offer a few hints for the completion of the bracelet, without any dread of the fate of Orpheus.

To the ladies who wear the pictures of their husbands or children, or any other relations, I can offer nothing more decent or more proper. It is reasonable to believe that she intends at least to perform her duty, who carries a perpetual excitement to recollection and caution, whose own ornaments must upbraid her with every failure, and who, by an open violation of her engagements, must for ever forfeit her bracelet.

Yet I know not whether it is the interest of the husband to solicit very earnestly a place on the bracelet. If his image be not in the heart, it is of small avail to hang it on the hand. A husband encircled with diamonds and rubies may gain some esteem, but will never excite love. He that thinks himself most secure of his wife, should be fearful of persecuting her continually with his presence. The joy of life is variety; the tenderest love requires to be rekindled by intervals of absence; and fidelity herself will be wearied with transferring her eye only from the same man to the same picture.

In many countries the condition of every woman is known by her dress. Marriage is rewarded with some honourable distinction which celibacy is forbidden to usurp. Some such information a bracelet might afford. The ladies might enrol themselves in distinct classes, and carry in open view the emblems of their order. The bracelet of the authoress may exhibit the muses in a grove of laurel; the housewife may show Penelope with her web; the votaress of a single life may carry Ursula with her troop of virgins; the gamester may

have Fortune with her wheel; and those women that have no character at all, may display a field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

There is a set of ladies who have outlived most animal pleasures, and having nothing rational to put in their place, solace with cards the loss of what time has taken away, and the want of what wisdom, having never been courted, has never given. For these, I know not now to provide a proper decoration. They cannot be numbered among the gamesters: for though they are always at play, they play for nothing, and never rise to the dignity of hazard or the reputation of skill. They neither love nor are loved, and cannot be supposed to contemplate any human image with delight. Yet though they despair to please, they always wish to be fine, and therefore cannot be without a bracelet. To this sisterhood I can recommend nothing more likely to please them than the king of clubs, a personage very comely and majestic, who will never meet their eyes without reviving the thought of some past or future party, and who may be displayed in the act of dealing with grace and propriety.

But the bracelet which might be most easily introduced into general use is a small convex mirror, is which the lady may see herself whenever she shall lift her hand. This will be a perpetual source of delight. Other ornaments are of use only in public, but this will furnish gratifications to solitude. This will show a face that must always please; she who is followed by admirers will carry about her a perpetual justification of the public voice; and she who passes without notice may appeal from prejudice to her own eyes.

But I know not why the privilege of the bracelet should be confined to women; it was in former ages worn by heroes in battle; and as modern soldiers are always distinguished by splendour of dress, I should rejoice to see the bracelet added to the cockade.

In hope of this ornamental innovation, I have spent some thoughts upon military bracelets. There is no passion more heroic than love; and therefore I should be glad to see the sons of England marching in the field, every man with the picture of a woman of honour bound upon his hand. But since in the army, as every where else, there will always be men who love nobody but themselves, or whom no woman of honour will permit to love her, there is a necessity of some other distinctions and devices.

I have read of a prince who, having lost a town, ordered the name of it to be every morning shouted in his ear till it should be recovered. For the same purpose I think the prospect of Minorca might be properly worn on the hands of some of our generals: others might delight their countrymen, and dignify themselves with a view of Rochefort as it appeared to them at sea: and those that shall return from the conquest of America, may exhibit the warehouse of Frontenac, with an inscription denoting that it was taken in less than three years by less than twenty thousand men.

I am, Sir, &c.

TOM TOY.

No. 40.] SATURDAY, JAN. 20, 1759.

THE practice of appending to the narratives of public transactions more minute and domestic intelligence, and filling the newspapers with advertisements, has grown up by slow degrees to its present state.

Genius is shown only by invention. The man who first took advantage of the general curiosity that was excited by a siege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the shop where the best puffs and powder were to be sold, was undoubtedly a man of great sagacity and profound skill in the nature of man. But when he had once shown the way, it was easy to follow him; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the public of all that he desires to buy or sell, whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes clothes, or teaches the mathematics; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is despised. Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused, and it is therefore become necessary to gain attention by magnificence of promises, and by eloquences sometimes sublime and sometimes pathetic.

Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement. I remember a wash-ball that had a quality truly wonderful—it gave an exquisite edge to the razor. And there are now to be sold, "for ready money only, some duvets for bed coverings, of down, beyond comparison, superior to what is called otter-down, and indeed such, that its many excellences cannot be here set forth." With one excellence we are made acquainted—"it is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one."

There are some, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modest sincerity. The vender of the beautifying fluid sells a lotion that repels pimples, washes away freckles, smooths the skin, and plumps the flesh: and yet, with a generous abhorrence of ostentation, confesses, that it will not "restore the bloom of fifteen to a lady of fifty."

The true pathos of advertisements must have sunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal shown by the seller of the anodyne necklace, for the ease and safety of poor toothing infants, and the affection with which he warned every mother, that "she would never forgive herself" if her infant should perish without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the camel and dromedary, so many specimens of the genuine sublime, that there is now arrived another subject yet more worthy of his pen, 'A famous Mohawk Indian warrior, who took Dieskaw the French general prisoner, dressed in the same manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his scalping-knife, tom-ax and all other implements of war! a sight worthy the curiosity of every true Briton!" This is a very powerful description: but a critic of great refinement would say, that it conveys rather horror than terror. An Indian, dressed as he

goes to war, may bring company together; but if he carries the scalping knife, and tomax, there are many true Britons that will never be persuaded to see him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the severer judges, that the salutary sorrow of tragic scenes is too soon effaced by the merriment of the epilogue; the same inconvenience arises from the improper disposition of advertisements. The noblest objects may be so associated as to be made ridiculous. The camel and dromedary themselves might have lost much of their dignity between "the true flower of mustard and the original Daffy's elixir;" and I could not but feel some indignation, when I found this illustrious Indian warrior immediately succeeded by "a fresh parcel of Dublin butter."

The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection, that it is not easy to propose any improvement. But as every art ought to be exercised in due subordination to the public good, I cannot but propose it as a moral question to these masters of the public ear, Whether they do not sometimes play too wantonly with our passions, as when the registrar of lottery tickets invites us to his shop by an account of the prizes which he sold last year; and whether the advertising controvertists do not indulge asperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the dispute about straps for razors, now happily subsided, and in the altercation which at present subsists concerning *eau de luce*?

In an advertisement it is allowed to every man to speak well of himself, but I know not why he should assume the privilege of censuring his neighbour. He may proclaim his own virtue or skill, but ought not to exclude others from the same pretensions.

Every man that advertises his own excellence should write with some consciousness of character which dares to call the attention of the public. He should remember that his name is to stand in the same paper with those of the king of Prussia and the emperor of Germany, and endeavour to make himself worthy of such association.

Some regard is likewise to be paid to posterity. There are men of diligence and curiosity who treasure up the papers of the day merely because others neglect them, and in time they will be scarce. When these collections shall be read in another century, how will numberless contradictions be reconciled; and how shall fame be possibly distributed among the tailors and boddice-makers of the present age?

Surely these things deserve consideration. It is enough for me to have hinted my desire that these abuses may be rectified; but such is the state of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without sufficient care or due qualifications.

No. 41.] SATURDAY, JAN. 27, 1759.

THE following letter relates to an affliction perhaps not necessary to be imparted to the public; but I could not persuade myself to suppress it, because I think I know the sentiments to be sincere, and I feel no disposition to provide for this day any other entertainment.

At tu quisquis eris, miseri qui crude poetæ
Crediderîs fletu funera digna tuo,
Hæc postrema tibi sit flendi causa, fluatque
Lenis inoffenso vitaque morsque gradu.

MR. IDLER,

NOTWITHSTANDING the warnings of philosophers, and the daily examples of losses and misfortunes which life forces upon our observation, such is the absorption of our thoughts in the business of the present day, such the resignation of our reason to empty hopes of future felicity, or such our unwillingness to foresee what we dread, that every calamity comes suddenly upon us, and not only presses us as a burden, but crushes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common course of nature, against which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flash of lightning intercepts the traveller in his way. The concussion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other miseries time brings, though silently, yet visibly, forward by its even lapse, which yet approach us unseen, because we turn our eyes away, and seize us unresisted, because we could not arm ourselves against them but by setting them before us.

That it is vain to shrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourselves which must sometime be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the speculative reasoner, whose thoughts are always from home, whose eye wanders over life, whose fancy dances after meteors of happiness kindled by itself, and who examines every thing rather than his own state.

Nothing is more evident than that the decays of age must terminate in death; yet there is no man, says Tully, who does not believe that he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the same principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend; but the fallacy will be in time detected; the last year, the last day, must come. It has come, and is past. The life which made my own life pleasant is at an end, and the gates of death are shut upon my prospects.

The loss of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish and endeavour tended, is a state of dreary desolation, in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itself, and finds nothing but emptiness and horror. The blameless life, the artless tenderness, the pious simplicity, the modest resignation, the patient sickness, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loss, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen sorrow for what cannot be recalled.

These are the calamities by which Providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate; but irreparable privation leaves no-

thing to exercise resolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languishment and grief.

Yet such is the course of nature, that whoever lives long must outlive those whom he loves and honours. Such is the condition of our present existence, that life must one time lose it, associations, and every inhabitant of the earth must walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any interested witness of his misfortunes or success.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel; for where is the bottom of the misery of man? But what is success to him that has none to enjoy it? Happiness is not found in self-contemplation: it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the state of departed souls, because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no farther intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent. "There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one sinner that repenteth:" and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let hope therefore dictate, what revelation does not confute, that the union of souls may still remain; and that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward.

These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in religion; when we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? and to what hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts when we consider that the greatest power is the best?

Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not seek succour in the gospel, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence, but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot assuage it. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but religion only can give patience.

I am, &c.

No. 42.] SATURDAY, FEB. 3, 1759.

THE subject of the following letter is not wholly unmentioned by the Rambler. The Spectator has also a letter containing a case not much different. I hope my correspondent's performance is more an effort of genius, than effusion of the passions; and that she hath rather attempted to paint some possible distress than really feels the evils she has described.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

There is a cause of misery, which, though certainly known both to you and your predecessors has been but little taken notice of in your papers; I mean the snares that the bad behaviour of parents extends over the paths of life which their children are to tread after them; and as I make no doubt but the *Idler* holds the shield for virtue as well as the glass for folly, that he will employ his leisure hours as much to his own satisfaction, in warning his readers against a danger, as in laughing them out of a fashion: for this reason to ask admittance for my story in your paper, though it has nothing to recommend it but truth, and the honest wish of warning others to shun the track which I am afraid may lead me at last to ruin.

I am the child of a father, who, having always lived in one spot in the country where he was born, and having had no genteel education himself, thought no qualification in the world desirable but as they led up to fortune, and no learning necessary to happiness but such as might most effectually teach me to make the best market of myself: I was unfortunately born a beauty, to a full sense of which my father took care to flatter me; and having, when very young, put me to school in the country, afterwards transplanted me to another in town, at the instigation of his friends, where his ill-judged fondness let me remain no longer than to learn just enough experience to convince me of the sordidness of his views, to give me an idea of perfections which my present situation will never suffer me to reach, and to teach me sufficient morals to dare to despise what is bad, though it be in a father.

Thus equipped (as he thought completely) for life, I was carried back into the county, and lived with him and my mother in a small village, within a few miles of the county-town, where I mixed, at first with reluctance, among company which, though I never despised, I could not approve, as they were brought up with other inclinations and narrower views than my own. My father took great pains to show me every where, both at his own house, and at such public diversions as the country afforded: he frequently told the people all he had was for his daughter; took care to repeat the civilities I had received from all his friends in London; told how much I was admired, all his little ambition could suggest to set me in a stronger light.

Thus have I continued tricked out for sale, as I may call it, and doomed, by parental authority, to a state little better than that of prostitution. I look on myself as growing cheaper every hour, and am losing all that honest pride, that modest confidence, in which the virgin dignity consists. Nor does my misfortune stop here: though many would be too generous to impute the follies of a father to a child whose heart has

set her above them; yet I am afraid the most charitable of them will hardly think it possible for me to be daily spectatress of his vices without tacitly allowing them, and at last consenting to them, as the eye of the frighted infant is, by degrees reconciled to the darkness of which at first it was afraid. It is a common opinion, he himself must very well know, that vices, like diseases, are often hereditary; and that the property of the one is to infect the manners, as the other poisons the springs of life.

Yet this though bad, is not the worst; my father deceives himself the hopes of the very child he has brought into the world; he suffers his house to be the seat of drunkenness, riot, and irreligion: who seduces, almost in my sight, the menial servant, converses with the prostitute, and corrupts the wife! Thus I, who from my earliest dawn of reason was taught to think that at my approach every eye sparkled with pleasure, or was dejected as conscious of superior charms, am excluded from society, through fear lest I should partake, if not of my father's crimes, at least of his reproach. Is a parent, who is so little solicitous for the welfare of a child, better than a pirate who turns a wretch adrift in a boat at sea, without a star to steer by, or an anchor to hold it fast? Am I not to lay all my miseries at those doors which ought to have opened only for my protection? And if doomed to add at last one more to the number of those wretches whom neither the world nor its law befriends, may I not justly say that I have been awed by a parent into ruin? But though a parent's power is screened from insult and violation by the very words of Heaven, yet surely no laws, divine or human, forbid me to remove myself from the malignant shade of a plant that poisons all around it, blasts the bloom of youth, checks its improvements, and makes all its flowerets fade; but to whom can the wretched, can the dependent fly? For me to fly a father's house, is to be a beggar; I have only one comforter amidst my anxieties, a pious relation, who bids me appeal to Heaven for a witness of my just intentions, fly as a deserted wretch to its protection; and being asked who my father is, point, like the ancient philosopher, with my finger to the heavens.

The hope in which I write this, is, that you will give it a place in your paper; and as your essays sometimes find their way into the country, that my father may read my story there; and, if not for his own sake yet for mine, spare to perpetuate that worst of calamities to me, the loss of character, from which all his dissimulation has not been able to rescue himself. Tell the world, Sir, that it is possible for virtue to keep its throne unshaken without any other guard than itself; that it is possible to maintain that purity of thought so necessary to the completion of human excellence even in the midst of temptations; when they have no friend within, nor are assisted by the voluntary indulgence of vicious thoughts.

If the insertion of a story like this does not break in on the plan of your paper, you have it in your power to be a better friend than her father to

PERDITA.

No. 43.] SATURDAY, FEB. 10, 1759.

THE natural advantages which arise from the position of the earth which we inhabit, with respect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical speculation, by which it has been discovered, that no other conformation of the system could have given such commodious distributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleasure to so great a part of a revolving sphere.

It may be, perhaps, observed by the moralist, with equal reason, that our globe seems particularly fitted for the residence of a being, placed here only for a short time, whose task is, to advance himself to a higher and happier state of existence, by unremitted vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

The duties required of a man are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay who yet intend some time to fufil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be conteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve; that the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side reminds us of the lapse of time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other, the rotation of seasons diversifies the year, the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines and sets; and the moon every night changes its form.

The day has been considered as an image of the year and the year as the representation of life. The morning answers to the spring, and the spring to childhood and youth; the noon corresponds to the summer, and the summer to the strength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with its silence and darkness shows the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life shall cease, with its hopes and pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a motion equable and easy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable uniformity, we should never mark its approaches to the end of the course. If one hour were like another; if the passage of the sun did not show that the day is wasting; if the change of seasons did not impress upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobserved. If the parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession, but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future, without will, and perhaps without power, to compute the periods of life, or to

compare the time which is already lost with that which may probably remain.

But the course of time is so visibly marked, that it is observed even by the birds of passage, and by nations who have raised their minds very little above animal instinct; there are human beings whose language does not supply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for summer and winter.

Yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of life. Every man has something to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the effects of time, that things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in her bloom, and, after an absence of twenty years, wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet those whom we left children, and can scarcely persuade ourselves to treat them as men. The traveller visits in age those countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of business wearied with unsatisfactory prosperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the last years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it be every man's study to exempt himself. Let him that desires to see others happy, make haste to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away something from the value of his benefaction. And let him, who purposes his own happiness, reflect, that while he forms his purpose the day rolls on, and "the night cometh when no man can work!"

No. 44.] Saturday, Feb. 17, 1759.

Memory is, among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the most frequent use, or rather that of which the agency is incessant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination suppose something already known, and draw their decisions only from experience. Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of distant, or anticipations, of future events, but by concluding what is possible from what is past.

The two offices of memory are collection and distribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for use. Collection is always the employment of our first years; and distribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and repose the various forms of things, is far the most pleasing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we see is new. When first we enter into the world, whithersoever we turn our eyes, they meet Knowledge with Pleasure at her side; every diversity of nature pours ideas in upon the soul; neither search nor labour are necessary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curiosity is gratified.

Much of the pleasure which the first survey of the world affords, is exhausted before we are conscious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with some other possible state. We have therefore few traces of the joy of our earliest discoveries; yet we all remember a time when nature had so many untasted gratifications, that every excursion gave delight which can now be found no longer, when the noise of a torrent, the rustle of a wood, the song of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and suspend all perception of the course of time.

But these easy pleasures are soon at end; we have seen in a very little time so much, that we call out for new objects of observation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life. But study is laborious, and not always satisfactory; and conversation has its pains as well as pleasures; we are willing to learn but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupilage men commonly set themselves free about the middle of life, by shutting up the avenues of intelligence, and resolving to rest in their present state; and they, whose ardour of inquiry continues longer, find themselves insensibly forsaken by their instructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between those that are younger and that are older than himself, is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century finds few that do not require from him that information which he once expected from those that went before him.

Then it is that the magazines of memory are opened, and the stores of accumulated knowledge are displayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honest commerce of mutual interest. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intense meditation without necessity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, seldom endeavours after further acquisitions.

The pleasure of recollecting speculative notions would not be much less than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the passages of life; but such is the necessary concatention of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleasure recurs but associated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time, when something was enjoyed that is now lost, when some hope was yet not blasted, when some purpose had yet not languished into sluggishness or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event just the same, that evil makes deeper impression than

good, it is certain that no man can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many oppotunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amusements, the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of death has snatched away.

When an offer was made to Themistocles of teaching him the art of memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for the art of forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of misery which he was unable to suppress, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with some oblivious antidote. In this we all resemble one another: the hero and the sage are like vulgar mortals, overburdened by the weight of life; all shrink from recollection, and all wish for an art of forgetfulness.

No. 45.] Saturday, Feb. 24, 1758.

There is in many minds a kind of vanity exerted to the disadvantage of themselves; a desire to be praised for superior acuteness discovered only in the degradation of their species, or censure of their country.

Defamation is sufficiently copious. The general lampooner of mankind my find long exercise for his zeal or wit, in the defects of nature, the vexations of life, the follies of opinion, and the corruptions of practice. But fiction is easier than discernment; and most of these writers spare themselves the labour of inquiry, and exhaust their virulence upon imaginary crimes, which, as they never existed can never be mended.

That the painters find no encouragement among the English for many other works than portraits, has been imputed to national selfishness. 'Tis vain, says the satirist, to set before any Englishman the scenes of landscapes, or the heroes of history; nature and antiquity are nothing in his eye; he has no value but for himself, nor desires any copy but of his own form.

Whoever is delighted with his own picture must derive his pleasure from the pleasure of another. Every man is always present to himself, and has, therefore, little need of his own resemblance, nor can desire it, but for the sake of those whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to be remembered. This use of the art is a natural and reasonable consequence of affection; and though, like other human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even such pride is more laudable than that, by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue nor excite it.

Genius is chiefly exerted in historical pictures; and the art of the painter of portraits is often lost in the obscurity of his subject. But it is in painting as in life, what is greatest is not always best. I should grieve to see Reynolds transfer to heroes and to goddesses, to empty splendour and to airy fiction, that art which is now employed in diffusing friendship, in reviving tenderness, in quickening the affections of the absent, and continuing the presence of the dead.

Yet in a nation, great and opulent, there is room, and ought to be patronage, for an art like that of painting through all its diversities; and it is to be wished, that the reward now offered for an historical picture may excite an honest emulation, and give beginning to an English school.

It is not very easy to find an action or event that can be efficaciously represented by a painter.

He must have an action not successive, but instantaneous; for the time of a picture is a single moment. For this reason the death of Hercules cannot well be painted, though at the first view it flatters the imagination with very glittering ideas; the gloomy mountain overhanging the sea, and covered with trees, some bending to the wind, and some torn from the root by the raging hero; the violence with which he sends from his shoulders the envenomed garment; the propriety with which his muscular nakedness may be displayed: the death of Lycas whirled from the promontory; the gigantic presence of Philoctetes; the blaze of the fatal pile, which the deities behold with grief and terror from the sky.

All these images fill the mind, but will not compose a picture, because they cannot be united in a single moment. Hercules must have rent his flesh at one time, and tossed Lycas into the air at another; he must first tear up the trees, and then lie down upon the pile.

The action must be circumstantial and distinct. There is a passage in the Iliad which cannot be read without strong emotions. A Trojan prince, seized by Achilles in the battle, falls at his feet, and in moving terms supplicates for life. "How can a wretch like thee," says the haughty Greek, "intreat to live when thou knowest that the time must come when Achilles is to die?" This cannot be painted, because no peculiarity of attitude or disposition can so supply the place of language as to impress the sentiment.

The event painted must be such as excites passions, and different passions in the several actors or a tumult of contending passion in the chief.

Perhaps the discovery of Ulysses by his nurse is of this kind. The surprise of the nurse mingled with joy; that of Ulysses checked by prudence, and clouded by solicitude; and the distinctness of the action by which the scar is found; all concur to complete the subject. But the picture, having only two figures, will want variety.

A much nobler assemblage may be furnished by the death of Epaminondas. The mixture of gladness and grief in the face of the messenger who brings his dying general an account of the victory; the various passions of the attendants; the sublimity of composure in the hero, while the dart is by his own command drawn from his side, and the faint gleam of

satisfaction that diffuses itself over the languor of death, are worthy of that pencil which yet I do not wish to see employed upon them.

If the design were not too multifarious and extensive, I should wish that our painters would attempt the dissolution of the parliament by Cromwell. The point of time may be chosen when Cromwell looked round the Pandæmonium with contempt, ordered the bauble to be taken away; and Harrison laid hands on the speaker to drag him from the chair.

The various appearances which rage, and terror, and astonishment, and guilt, might exhibit in the faces of that hateful assembly, of whom the principal persons may be faithfully drawn from portraits or prints; the irresolute repugnance of some, the hypocritical submission of others, the ferocious insolence of Cromwell, the rugged brutality of Harrison, and the general trepidation of fear and wickedness, would, if some proper disposition could be contrived, make a picture of unexampled variety, and irresistible instruction.

No. 46.] Saturday, March 3, 1759.

Mr. Idler,

I am encouraged, by the notice you have taken of Betty Broom, to represent the miseries which I suffer from a species of tyranny which, I believe, is not very uncommon, though perhaps it may have escaped the observation of those who converse little with fine ladies, or see them only in their public characters.

To this method of venting my vexation I am the more inclined, because if I do not complain to you, I must burst in silence; for my mistress has teased me, and teased me till I can hold no longer, and yet I must not tell her of her tricks. The girls that live in common services can quarrel, and give warning, and find other places; but we that live with great ladies, if we once offend them, have nothing left but to return into the country.

I am waiting maid to a lady who keeps the best company, and is seen at every place of fashionable resort. I am envied by all the maids in the square, for few countesses leave off so many clothes as my mistress, and nobody shares with me; so that I supply two families in the country with finery for the assizes and horse-races, besides what I wear myself. The steward and house-keeper have joined against me to procure my removal, that they may advance a relation of their own; but their designs are found out by my lady, who says I need not fear them, for she will never have dowdies about her.

You would think, Mr. Idler, like others, that I am very happy, and may well be contented with my lot. But I will tell you. My lady has an odd humour. She never orders any thing in direct words, for she loves a sharp girl that can take a hint.

I would not have you suspect that she has any thing to hint which she is ashamed to speak at length; for none can have greater purity of sentiment, or rectitude of intention. She has nothing to hide, yet nothing will she tell. She always gives her directions oblique and allusively, by the mention of something relative or consequential, without any other purpose than to exercise my acuteness and her own.

It is impossible to give a notion of this style otherwise than by examples. One night, when she had sat writing letters till it was time to be dressed, "Molly," said she, "the ladies are all to be at court to-night in white aprons." When she means that I should send to order the chair, she says, "I think the streets are clean I may venture to walk." When she would have something put into its place, she bids me "lay it on the floor." If she would have me snuff the candles, she asks, "whether I think her eyes are like a cat's?" If she thinks her chocolate delayed, she talks of the benefit of abstinence. If any needle-work is forgotten, she supposes that I have heard of the lady who died by pricking her finger.

She always imagines that I can recall every thing past from a single word. If she wants her head from the milliner she only says, "Molly, you know Mrs. Tape." If she would have the mantua-maker sent for, she remarks that "Mr. Taffety, the mercer, was here last week." She ordered, a fortnight ago, that the first time she was abroad all-day I should choose her a new set of coffee-cups at the china-shop; of this she reminded me yesterday, as she was going down stairs, by saying, "You can't find your way now to Pall-Mall."

All this would not vex me, if, by increasing my trouble, she spared her own; but, dear Mr. Idler, is it not as easy to say coffee-cups, as Pall-Mall? and to tell me in plain words what I am to do, and when it is to be done, as to torment her own head with the labour of finding hints, and mine with that of understanding them?

When first I came to this lady, I had nothing like the learning that I have now; for she has many books, and I have much time to read; so that of late I have seldom missed her meaning: but when she first took me I was an ignorant girl; and she, who, as is very common, confounded want of knowledge with want of understanding, began once to despair of bringing me to any thing, because, when I came into her chamber at the call of her bell, she asked me, "Whether we lived in Zembla;" and I did not guess the meaning of inquiry, but modestly answered that I could not tell. She had happened to ring once when I did not hear her, and meant to put me in mind of that country where sounds are said to be congealed by the frost.

Another time, as I was dressing her head, she began to talk on a sudden of Medusa and snakes, and "men turned into stone, and maids that, if they were not watched, would let their mistresses be Gorgons." I looked round me half frightened, and quite bewildered; till at last, finding that her literature was thrown away upon me, she bid me, with great vehemence, reach the curling-irons.

It is not without some indignation, Mr. Idler,

that I discover, in these artifices of vexation, something worse than foppery or caprice; a mean delight in superiority, which knows itself in no danger of reproof or opposition; a cruel pleasure in seeing the perplexity of a mind obliged to find what is studiously concealed, and a mean indulgence of petty malevolence in the sharp censure of involuntary, and very often of inevitable failings. When, beyond her expectation, I hit upon her meaning I can perceive a sudden cloud of disappointment spread over her face; and have sometimes been afraid lest I should lose her favour by understanding her when she means to puzzle me.

This day, however, she has conquered my sagacity. When she went out of her dressing-room she said nothing but "Molly, you know," and hastened to her chariot. What I am to know is yet a secret; but if I do not know before she comes back, what I have yet no means of discovering, she will make my dulness a pretence for a fortnight's ill humour, treat me as a creature devoid of the faculties necessary to the common duties of life, and perhaps give the next gown to the housekeeper.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
Molly Quick.

No 47.] Saturday, March 10, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Mr. Idler,

I am the unfortunate wife of a city wit, and cannot but think that my case may deserve equal compassion with any of those which have been represented in your paper.

I married my husband within three months after the expiration of his apprenticeship; we put our money together, and furnished a large and splendid shop, in which he was for five years and a half diligent and civil. The notice which curiosity or kindness commonly bestows on beginners, was continued by confidence and esteem; one customer, pleased with his treatment and his bargain recommended another; and we were busy behind the counter from morning to night.

Thus every day increased our wealth and our reputation. My husband was often invited to dinner openly on the Exchange by hundred-thousand-pounds men; and whenever I went to any of the halls, the wives of the aldermen made me low courtesies. We always took up our notes before the day, and made all considerable payments by drafts upon our banker.

You will easily believe that I was well enough pleased with my condition; for what happiness can be greater than that of growing every day richer and richer? I will not deny that, imagining myself likely to be in a short time the sheriff's lady, I broke off my acquaintance with some of my neighbours; and advised my husband to keep good company, and not to be seen with men that were worth nothing.

In time he found that ale disagreed with his constitution, and went every night to drink his pint at a tavern, where he met with a set of critics, who disputed upon the merits of the different theatrical performers. By these idle fellows he was taken to the play, which at first he did not seem much to heed; for he owned, that he very seldom knew what they were doing, and that, while his companions would let him alone, he was commonly thinking on his last bargain.

Having once gone, however, he went again and again, though I often told him that three shillings were thrown away; at last he grew uneasy if he missed a night, and importuned me to go with him. I went to a tragedy which they called Macbeth; and, when I came home, told him, that I could not bear to see men and women make themselves such fools, by pretending to be witches and ghosts, generals and kings, and to walk in their sleep when they were as much awake as those that looked at them. He told me that I must get higher notions, and that a play was the most rational of all entertainments, and most proper to relax the mind after the business of the day.

By degrees he gained knowledge of some of the players; and when the play was over, very frequently treated them with suppers; for which he was admitted to stand behind the scenes.

He soon began to lose some of his morning hours in the same folly, and was for one winter very diligent in his attendance on the rehearsals; but of this species of idleness he grew weary, and said, that the play was nothing without the company.

His ardour for the diversion of the evening increased; he bought a sword, and paid five shillings a night to sit in the boxes; he went sometimes into a place which he calls the green-room where all the wits of the age assembled; and, when he had been there, could do nothing for two or three days but repeat their jests, or tell their disputesd

He has now lost his regard for every thing but the play-house: he invites, three times a week, one or other to drink claret, and talk of the drama. His first care in the morning is to read the play-bills; and, if he remembers any lines of the tragedy which is to be represented, walks about the shop, repeating them so loud, and with such strange gestures, that the passengers gather round the door.

His greatest pleasure, when I married him, was to hear the situation of his shop commended, and to be told how many estates have been got in it by the same trade; but of late he grows peevish at any mention of business, and delights in nothing so much as to be told that he speaks like Mossop.

Among his new associates he has learned another language, and speaks in such a strain that his neighbours cannot understand him. If a customer talks longer than he is willing to hear, he will complain that he has been excrutiated with unmeaning verbosity; he laughs at the letters of his friends for their tameness of expression, and often declares

himself weary of attending to the *minutiæ* of a shop.

It is well for me that I know how to keep a book, for of late he is scarcely ever in the way. Since one of his friends told him that he had a genius for tragic poetry, he has locked himself in an upper room six or seven hours a day; and, when I carry him any paper to be read or signed, I hear him talking vehemently to himself, sometimes of love and beauty, sometimes of friendship and virtue, but more frequently of liberty and his country.

I would gladly, Mr. Idler, be informed what to think of a shopkeeper who is incessantly talking about liberty; a word which, since his acquaintance with polite life, my husband has always in his mouth; he is, on all occasions, afraid of our liberty, and declares his resolution to hazard all for liberty. What can the man mean? I am sure he has liberty enough—it were better for him and me if his liberty was lessened.

He has a friend whom he calls a critic, that comes twice a week to read what he is writing. This critic tells him that his piece is a little irregular, but that some detached scenes will shine prodigiously, and that in the character of Bombulus he is wonderfully great. My scribbler then squeezes his hand, calls him the best of friends, thanks him for his sincerity, and tells him that he hates to be flattered. I have reason to believe that he seldom parts with his dear friend without lending him two guineas, and am afraid that he gave bail for him three days ago.

By this course of life our credit as traders is lessened, and I cannot forbear to suspect, that my husband's honour as a wit is not much advanced, for he seem to be always the lowest of the company, and is afraid to tell his opinion till the rest have spoken. When he was behind his counter, he used to be brisk, active, and jocular, like a man that knew what he was doing and did not fear to look another in the face; but among wits and critics he is timorous and awkward, and hangs down his head at his own table. Dear Mr. Idler, persuade him, if you can, to return once more to his native element. Tell him, that his wit will never make him rich, but that there are places where riches will always make a wit.

I am, Sir, &c.

DEBORAH GINGER.

No. 48.] SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1759.

THERE is no kind of idleness, by which we are so easily seduced as that which dignifies itself by the appearance of business, and by making the loiterer imagine that he has something to do which must not be neglected, keeps him in perpetual agitation, and hurries him rapidly from place to place.

He that sits still or reposes himself upon a couch, no more deceives himself than he deceives others; he knows that he is doing nothing, and has no other solace of his insignificance than the resolution, which the lazy hourly make, of changing his mode of life.

To do nothing every man is ashamed; and do much almost every man is unwilling or afraid. Innumerable expedients have therefore been invented to produce motion without labour, and employment without solicitude. The greater part of those whom the kindness of fortune has left to their own direction, and whom want does not keep chained to the counter or the plough, play throughout life with the shadows of business, and know not at last what they have been doing.

These imitators of action are of all denominations. Some are seen at every auction without intention to purchase; others appear punctually at the Exchange, though they are known there only by their faces. Some are always making parties to visit collections for which they have no taste; and some neglect every pleasure and every duty to hear questions, in which they have no interest, debated in parliament.

These men never appear more ridiculous than in the distress which they imagine themselves to feel, from some accidental interruption of those empty pursuits. A tiger newly imprisoned is indeed more formidable, but not more angry, than Jack Tulip withheld from a florist's feast, or Tom Distich hindered from seeing the first representation of a play.

As political affairs are the highest and most extensive of temporal concerns; the mimic of a politician is more busy and important than any other trifler. Monsieur le Noir, a man who, without property or importance in any corner of the earth, has, in the present confusion of the world, declared himself a steady adherent to the French, is made miserable by a wind that keeps back the packet boat, and still more miserable by every account of a Malouin privateer caught in his cruise; he knows well that nothing can be done or said by him which can produce any effect but that of laughter, that he can neither hasten or retard good or evil, that his joys and sorrows have scarcely any partakers; yet such is his zeal, and such his curiosity, that he would run barefooted to Gravesend, for the sake of knowing first that the English had lost a tender, and would ride out to meet every mail from the continent if he might be permitted to open it.

Learning is generally confessed to be desirable, and there are some who fancy themselves always busy in acquiring it. Of these ambulatory students, one of the most busy is my friend Tom Restless.

Tom has long had a mind to be a man of knowledge, but he does not care to spend much time among authors; for he is of opinion that few books deserve the labour of perusal, that they give the mind an unfashionable cast, and destroy that freedom of thought and easiness of manners indispensably requisite to acceptance in the world. Tom has therefore found another way to wisdom. When he rises he goes into a coffee-house, where he creeps so near to men whom he takes to be reasoners as to hear their discourse, and endeavours to remember something which, when it has been strained through Tom's head, is so near nothing, that what it once was cannot be discovered. This

he carries round from friend to friend through a circle of visits, till, hearing what each says upon the question, he becomes able at dinner to say a little himself; and, as every great genius relaxes himself among his inferiors, meets with some who wonder how so young a man can talk so wisely.

At night he has a new feast prepared for his intellects; he always runs to a disputing society, or a speaking club, where he half hears what, if he had heard the whole, he would but half understand; goes home pleased with the consciousness of a day well spent, lies down full of ideas, and rises in the morning empty as before.

No. 49.] SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1759.

I SUPPED three nights ago with my friend Will Marvel. His affairs obliged him lately to take a journey into Devonshire, from which he has just returned. He knows me to be a very patient hearer, and was glad of my company, as it gave him an opportunity of disburdening himself by a minute relation of the casualties of his expedition.

Will is not one of those who go out and return with nothing to tell. He has a story of his travels, which will strike a home-bred citizen with horror, and has in ten days suffered so often the extremes of terror and joy, that he is in doubt whether he shall ever again expose either his body or mind to such danger and fatigue.

When he left London the morning was bright and a fair day was promised. But Will is born to struggle with difficulties. That happened to him, which has sometimes, perhaps, happened to others. Before he had gone more than ten ten miles it began to rain. What course was to be taken? His soul disdained to turn back. He did what the king of Prussia might have done; he flapped his hat, buttoned up his cape, and went forwards, fortifying his mind by the stoical consolation, that whatever is violent will be short.

His constancy was not long tried; at the distance of about half a mile he saw an inn, which he entered wet and weary, and found civil treatment and proper refreshment. After a respite of about two hours, he looked abroad, and seeing the sky clear, called for his horse, and passed the first stage without any other memorable accident.

Will considered, that labour must be relieved by pleasure, and that the strength which great undertakings require must be maintained by copious nutriment; he therefore ordered himself an elegant supper, drank two bottles of claret, and passed the beginning of the night in sound sleep; but, waking before light, was forewarned of the troubles of the next day, by a shower beating against his windows with such violence as to threaten the dissolution of nature. When he arose, he found what he expected, that the country was under water. He joined himself, however, to a company that was travelling the same way, and came safely to the place of dinner, though every step of his horse dashed the mud into the air.

In the afternoon, having parted from his company, he set forward alone, and passed many collections of water, of which it was impossible to guess the depth, and which he now cannot review without some censure of his own rashness; but what a man undertakes he must perform, and Marvel hates a coward at his heart.

Few that lie warm in their beds think what others undergo, who have perhaps been as tenderly educated, and have as acute sensations as themselves. My friend was now to lodge the second night almost fifty miles from home, in a house which he never had seen before, among people to whom he was totally a stranger, not knowing whether the next man he should meet would prove good or bad; but seeing an inn of a good appearance, he rode resolutely into the yard; and knowing that respect is often paid in proportion as it is claimed, delivered his injunctions to the hostler with spirit, and entering the house called vigorously about him.

On the third day up rose the sun and Mr. Marvel. His troubles and his dangers were now such as he wishes no other man ever to encounter. The ways were less frequented, and the country more thinly inhabited. He rode many a lonely hour through mire and water, and met not a single soul for two miles together with whom he could exchange a word. He cannot deny that, looking round upon the dreary region, and seeing nothing but bleak fields and naked trees, hills obscured by fogs, and flats covered with inundations, he did for some time suffer melancholy to prevail upon him, and wished himself again safe at home. One comfort he had, which was to consider that none of his friends were in the same distress, for whom, if they had been with him, he should have suffered more than for himself; he could not forbear sometimes to consider how happy the *Idler* is, settled in an easier condition, who, surrounded like him with terrors, could have done nothing but lie down and die.

Admist these reflections he came to a town, and found a dinner which disposed him to more cheerful sentiments: but the joys of life are short, and its miseries are long; he mounted and travelled fifteen miles more through dirt and desolation.

At last the sun set, and all the horrors of darkness came upon him. He then repented the weak indulgence in which he had gratified himself at noon with too long an interval of rest: yet he went forward along a path which he could no longer see, sometimes rushing suddenly into water, and sometimes incumbered with stiff clay, ignorant whither he was going, and uncertain whether his next step might not be the last.

In this dismal gloom of nocturnal peregrination his horse unexpectedly stood still. Marvel had heard many relations of the instinct of horses, and was in doubt what danger might be at hand. Sometimes he fancied that he was on the bank of a river, still and deep, and

sometimes that a dead body lay across the track. He sat still awhile to recollect his thoughts; and as he was about to alight and explore the darkness, out stepped a man with a lantern, and opened the turnpike. He hired a guide to the town, arrived in safety, and slept in quiet.

The rest of his journey was nothing but danger. He climbed and descended precipices on which vulgar mortals tremble to look; he passed marshes like the "Serbonian bog, where armies whole have sunk;" he forded rivers where the current roared like the Egre or the Severn; or ventured himself on bridges that trembled under him, from which he looked down on foaming whirlpools, or dreadful abysses: he wandered over houseless heaths, amidst all the rage of the elements, with the snow driving in his face, and the tempest howling in his ears.

Such are the colours in which Marvel paints his adventures. He has accustomed himself to sounding words and hyperbolical images, till he has lost the power of true description. In a road through which the heaviest carriages pass without difficulty, and the post-boy every day and night goes and returns, he meets with hardships like those which are endured in Siberian deserts, and misses nothing of romantic danger but a giant and a dragon. When his dreadful story is told in proper terms, it is only that the way was dirty in winter, and that he experienced the common vicissitudes of rain and sun-shine.

No. 50.] Saturday, March 31, 1759.

The character of Mr. Marvel has raised the merriment of some and the contempt of others, who do not sufficiently consider how often they hear and practise the same arts of exaggerated narration.

There is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that swarm upon the earth, a single man who does not believe that he has something extraordinary to relate of himself; and who does not, at one time or other, summon the attention of his friends to the casualties of his adventures, and the vicissitudes of his fortune; casualties and vicissitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diversified; to the commander of armies, and the writer at a desk, to the sailor who resigns himself to the wind and water, and the farmer whose longest journey is to the market.

In the present state of the world men may pass through Shakspeare's seven stages of life, and meet nothing singular and wonderful. But such is every man's attention to himself, that what is common and unheeded when it is only seen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the usual process of nature that men should sicken and recover, that some designs should succeed and others miscarry, that friends should be separated, and meet again, that some should be made angry by endeavours to please them, and some be pleased when no care has been used to gain their approbation; that men and women should at first come together by chance, like each other so well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondness, increase or extinguish fondness by marriage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, some of whom die before their parents, and others survive them.

Yet let any tell his own story, and nothing of all this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things; something has always discriminated his case; some unusual concurrence of events has appeared which made him more happy or more miserable than other mortals; for in pleasures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that without some artificial augmentations, many of the pleasures of life, and almost all its embellishments, would fall to the ground. If no man was to express more delight than he felt, those who felt most would raise little envy. If travellers were to describe the most laboured performances of art with the same coldness as the survey them, all expectations of happiness from change of place would cease. The pictures of Raphael would hang without spectators, and the gardens of Versailles might be inhabited by hermits. All the pleasure that is received ends in an opportunity of splendid falsehood, in the power of gaining notice by the display of beauties which the eye was weary of beholding, and a history of happy moments, of which in reality the most happy was the last.

The ambition of superior sensibility and superior eloquence disposes the lovers of arts to receive rapture at one time, and communicate it at another; and each labours first to impose upon himself, and then to propagate the imposture.

Pain is less subject than pleasure to caprices of expression. The torments of disease, and the grief for irremediable misfortunes, sometimes, are such as no words can declare, and can only be signified by groans, or sobs, or inarticulate ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode of utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none peculiar to pleasure, because he never has pleasure, but in such degrees as the ordinary use of language may equal or surpass.

It is nevertheless certain, that many pains as well as pleasures are heightened by rhetorical affectation, and that the picture is, for the most part, bigger than the life.

When we describe our sensations of another's sorrow either in friendly or ceremonious condolence, the customs of the world scarcely admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fondest friendship would enrage oftener than comfort, were the tongue on such occasions faithfully to represent the sentiments of the heart; and I think the strictest moralists allow forms of address to be used without much regard to their literal acceptation, when either respect or tenderness requires them, because they are universally know to denote not the degree but the species of our sentiments.

But the same indulgence cannot be allowed to him who aggravates dangers incurred or

sorrow endured by himself, because he darkens the prospect of futurity, and multiplies the pains of our condition by useless terror. Those who magnify their delights are less criminal deceivers, yet they raise hopes which are sure to be disappointed. It would be undoubtedly best, if we could see and hear every thing as it is, that nothing might be too anxiously dreaded, or too ardently pursued.

No. 51.] Saturday, April 7, 1759.

It has been commonly remarked, that eminent men are least eminent at home, that bright characters lose much of their splendour at a nearer view, and many who fill the world with their fame, excite very little reverence among those that surround them in their domestic privacies.

To blame or to suspect is easy and natural. When the fact is evident, and the cause doubtful, some accusation is always engendered between idleness and malignity. This disparity of general and familiar esteem is therefore imputed to hidden vices, and to practises indulged in secret, but carefully covered from the public eye.

Vice will indeed always produce contempt. The dignity of Alexander, though nations fell prostrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight revels, who had seen him, in the madness of wine, murder his friend, or set fire to the Persian palace at the instigation of a harlot; and it is well remembered among us, that the avarice of Marlborough kept him in subjection to his wife while he was dreaded by France as her conqueror, and honoured by the emperor as his deliverer.

But though, where there is vice there must be want of reverence, it is not reciprocally true that when there is want of reverence there is always vice. That awe which great actions or abilities impress will be inevitably diminished by acquaintance, though nothing either mean or criminal should be found.

Of men, as of every thing else, we must judge according to our knowledge. When we see of a hero only his battles, or of a writer only his books, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatness. We consider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as the instructor of mankind. We have neither opportunity nor motive to examine the minuter parts of their lives, or the less apparent peculiarities of their characters; we name them with habitual respect, and forget, what we still continue to know, that they are men like other mortals.

But such is the constitution of the world, that much of life must be spent in the same manner by the wise and the ignorant, the exalted and the low. Men, however distinguished by external accidents or intrinsic qualities, have all the same wants, the same pains, and, as far as the senses are consulted, the same pleasure. The petty cares and petty duties are the same in every station to every understanding, and every hour brings some occasion on which we all sink to the common level. We are all naked till we are dressed, and hungry till we are fed; and the general's triumph, and sage's disputation, end, like the humble labours of the smith or ploughman, in a dinner or in sleep.

Those notions which are to be collected by reason, in opposition to the senses, will seldom stand forward in the mind, but lie treasured in the remoter repositories of memory, to be found only when they are sought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will scarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not easily consider him as great, whom our own eyes show us to be little; nor labour to keep present to our thoughts the latent excellencies of him who shares with us all our weaknesses and many of our follies; who like us is delighted with slight amusements, busied with trifling employments, and disturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigencies make them necessary. Great exigencies can happen but seldom, and therefore those qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind lie hid, for the most part, like subterranean treasures, over which the foot passes as on common ground, till necessity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebration of victory, a slave was placed on a triumphal car, by the side of the general, who reminded him by a short sentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be lest a leader, in his passage to the capitol, should forget the frailties of his nature, there was surely no need of such an admonition: the intoxication could not have continued long; he would have been at home but a few hours before some of his dependents would have forgot his greatness, and shown him, that notwithstanding his laurels, he was yet a man.

There are some who try to escape this domestic degradation, by labouring to appear always wise or always great; but he that strives against nature will for ever strive in vain. To be grave of mien and slow of utterance; to look with solicitude and speak with hesitation, is attainable at will; but the show of wisdom is ridiculous when there is nothing to cause doubt, as that of valour where there is nothing to be feared.

A man who has duly considered the condition of his being will contentedly yield to the course of things; he will not pant for distinction where distinction would imply no merit; but though on great occasions he may wish to be greater than others, he will be satisfied in common occurrences not to be less.

No. 52.] Saturday, April 14, 1759.

Responsare cupidinibus. HOR.

The practice of self-denial, or the forebearance of lawful pleasures, has been considered by almost every nation, from the remotest ages, as the highest exaltation of human virtue; and all have agreed to pay respect and vene-

ration to those who abstained from the delights of life, even when they did not censure those who enjoy them.

The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confesses that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its proper gratifications but at the expense of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body. And none have failed to confer their esteem on those who prefer intellect to sense, who control their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and desires of animal life for rational disquisitions or pious contemplations.

The earth has scarcely a country so far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into classes, where some orders of men or women are not distinguished by voluntary severities, and where the reputation of their sanctity is not increased in proportion to the rigour of their rules, and the exactness of their performance.

When an opinion to which there is no temptation of interest spreads wide and continues long, it may reasonably be presumed to have been issued by nature or dictated by reason. It has been often observed that the fictions of imposture, and illusions of fancy soon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps its ground but truth, which gains every day new influence by new confirmation.

But truth, when it is reduced to practice, easily becomes subject to caprice and imagination; and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principal be right. It cannot be denied that a just conviction of the restraint necessary to be laid upon the appetites has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification, and institutions, which, however favourably considered, will be found to violate nature without promoting piety.

But the doctrine of self-denial is not weakened in itself by the errors of those who misinterpret or misapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the understanding is hourly perceived; and the state of those, whom sensuality has enslaved, is known to be in the highest degree despicable and wretched.

The dread of such shameful captivity may justly raise alarms, and wisdom will endeavour to keep danger at a distance. By timely caution and suspicious vigilance those desires may be repressed, to which indulgence would soon give absolute dominion; those enemies may be overcome, which, when they have been a while accustomed to victory, can no longer be resisted.

Nothing is more fatal to happiness or virtue, than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own strength, and by assuring us of the power of retreat, precipitates us into hazard. Some may safely venture farther than others into the regions of delight, lay themselves more open to the golden shafts of pleasure, and advance nearer to the residence of the Sirens; but he that is best armed with constancy and reason is yet vulnerable in one part or other, and to every man there is a point fixed, beyond which, if he passes he will not easily return. It is certainly most wise, as it is most safe, to stop before he touches the utmost limit, since every step of advance will more and more entice him to go forward, till he shall at last enter into the recesses of voluptuousness, and sloth and despondency close the passage behind them.

To deny early and inflexibly, is the only art of checking the importunity of desire, and of preserving quiet and innocence. Innocent gratifications must be sometimes withheld; he that complies with all lawful desires will certainly lose his empire over himself, and in time either submit his reason to his wishes, and think all his desires lawful, or dismiss his reason as troublesome and intrusive and resolve to snatch what he may happen to wish, without inquiring about right and wrong.

No man whose appetites are his masters, can perform the duties of his nature with strictness and regularity; he that would be superior to external influences must first become superior to his own passions.

When the Roman general, sitting at supper with a plate of turnips before him, was solicited by large presents to betray his trust, he asked the messengers whether he that could sup on turnips was a man likely to sell his own country. Upon him who has reduced his senses to obedience, temptation has lost its power; he is able to attend impartially to virtue, and execute her commands without hesitation.

To set the mind above the appetites is the end of abstinence, which one of the fathers observes to be not a virtue, but the ground-work of virtue. By forbearing to do what may innocently be done, we may add hourly new vigour or resolution, and secure the power of resistance when pleasure or interest shall lend their charms to guilt.

No. 53.] Saturday, April 21, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have a wife that keeps good company. You know that the word good varies its meaning according to the value set upon different qualities in different places. To be a good man in a college, is to be learned; in a camp, to be brave; and in the city, to be rich. By good company in the place which I have the misfortune to inhabit, we understand not always those from whom any good can be learned, whether wisdom or virtue; or by whom any good can be conferred, whether profit or reputation. Good company is the company of those whose birth is high, and whose riches are great; or of those whom the rich and noble admit to familiarity.

I am a gentleman of fortune by no means exuberant, but more than equal to the wants of my family, and for some years equal to our desires. My wife, who had never been accustomed to splendour, joined her endeavours to mine in the superintendence of our economy,

we lived in decent plenty, and were not excluded from moderate pleasures.

But slight causes produce great effects. All my happiness has been destroyed by change of place; virtue is too often merely local: in some situations the air diseases the body, and in others poisons the mind. Being obliged to remove my habitation, I was led by my evil genius to a convenient house in a street where many of the nobility reside. We had scarcely ranged our furniture, and aired our rooms, when my wife began to grow discontented, and to wonder what the neighbours would think when they saw so few chairs and chariots at her door.

Her acquaintance, who came to see her from the quarter that we had left, mortified her without design, by continual inquiries about the ladies whose houses they viewed from our windows. She was ashamed to confess that she had no intercourse with them, and sheltered her distress under general answers, which always tended to raise suspicion that she knew more than she would tell; but she was often reduced to difficulties, when the course of talk introduced questions about the furniture or ornaments of their houses, which, when she could get no intelligence, she was forced to pass slightly over, as things which she saw so often that she never minded them.

To all these vexations she was resolved to put an end, and redoubled her visits to those few of her friends who visited those who kept good company; and, if ever she met a lady of quality, forced herself into notice by respect and assiduity. Her advances were generally rejected; and she heard them, as they went down stairs talk how some creatures put themselves forward.

She was not discouraged, but crept forward from one to another; and as perseverance will do great things, sapped her way unperceived, till, unexpectedly, she appeared at the card table of lady Biddy Porpoise, a lethargic virgin, of seventy-six, whom all the families in the next square visited very punctually when she was not at home.

This was the first step of that elevation to which my wife has since ascended. For five months she had no name in her mouth but that of lady Biddy, who, let the world say what it would, had a fine understanding, and such a command of her temper, that whether she won or lost, she slept over her cards.

At lady Biddy's she met with lady Tawdry, whose favour she gained by estimating her earrings, which were counterfeit, at twice the value of real diamonds. When she once entered two houses of distinction, she was easily admitted into more, and in ten weeks had all her time anticipated by parties and engagements. Every morning she is bespoke, in the summer, for the gardens; in the winter, for a sale; every afternoon she has visits to pay, and every night brings an inviolable appointment, or an assembly in which the best company in the town were to appear.

You will easily imagine that much of my domestic comfort is withdrawn. I never see my wife but in the hurry of preparation or the languor of weariness. To dress and to undress is almost her whole business in private, and the servants take advantage of her negligence to increase expense. But I can supply her omission by my own diligence, and should not much regret this new course of life, if it did nothing more than transfer me to the care of our accounts. The changes which it has made are more vexatious. My wife has no longer the use of her understanding. She has no rule of action but the fashion. She has no opinion but that of the people of quality. She has no language but the dialect of her own set of company. She hates and admires in humble imitation; and echoes the words charming and detestable without consulting her own preceptions.

If for a few minutes we sit down together, she entertains me with the repartees of lady Cackle, or the conversation of lord Whiffler, and Miss Quick, and wonder to find me receiving with indifference sayings which put all the company into laughter.

By her old friends she is no longer very willing to be seen, but she must not rid herself of them all at once: and is sometimes surprised by her best visitants in company which she would not show and cannot hide; but from the moment that a countess enters, she takes care neither to hear nor see them; they soon find themselves neglected, and retire; and she tells her ladyship that they are somehow related at a great distance, and that as they are good sort of people she cannot be rude to them.

As by this ambitious union with those that are above her, she is always forced upon disadvantageous comparisons of her condition with theirs, she has a constant source of misery within; and never returns from glittering assemblies and magnificent apartments but she growls out her discontent, and wonders why she was doomed to so indigent a state. When she attends the dutchess to a sale, she always sees something she cannot buy; and, that she may not seem wholly insignificant, she will sometimes venture to bid, and often make acquisitions which she did not want, at prices which she cannot afford.

What adds to all this uneasiness is that this expense is without use, and this vanity without honour; she forsakes houses where she might be courted, for those where she is only suffered; her equals are daily made her enemies, and her superiors will never be her friends.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

No. 54.] Saturday, April 28, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

You have lately entertained your admirers with the case of an unfortunate husband, and thereby given a demonstrative proof you are not averse even to hear appeals and terminate differences between man and wife; I therefore take the liberty to present you with the

case of an injured lady, which, as it chiefly relates to what I think the lawyers call a point of law, I shall do in as juridical a manner as I am capable, and submit it to the consideration of the learned gentlemen of that profession.

Imprimis. In the style of my marriage articles, a marriage was "had and solemnized," about six months ago, between me and Mr. Savecharges, a gentleman possessed of a plentiful fortune of his own, and one who, I was persuaded, would improve, and not spend, mine.

Before our marriage, Mr. Savecharges had all along preferred the salutary exercise of walking on foot to the distempered ease, as he terms it, of lolling in a chariot; but, notwithstanding his fine panegyrics on walking, the great advantages the infantry were in the sole possession of, and the many dreadful dangers they escaped, he found I had very different notions of an equipage, and was not easily to be converted, or gained over to his party.

An equipage I was determined to have, whenever I married. I too well knew the disposition of my intended consort to leave the providing one entirely to his honour, and flatter myself Mr. Savecharges has, in the articles made previous to our marriage, agreed to keep me a coach; but lest I should be mistaken, or the attorney should not have done me justice in methodising or legalising these half dozen words, I will set about and transcribe that part of the agreement, which will explain the matter to you much better than can be done by one who is so deeply interested in the event; and show on what foundation I build my hopes of being soon under the transporting, delightful denomination of a fashionable lady, who enjoys the exalted and much-envied felicity of bowling about in her own coach.

"And further the said Solomon Savecharges, for divers good causes and considerations him hereunto moving, hath agreed, and doth hereby agree, that the said Solomon Savecharges shall and will, so soon as conveniently may be after the solemnization of the said intended marriage, at his own proper cost and charges, find and provide a certain vehicle or four-wheel carriage, commonly called or known by the name of a coach; which said vehicle or wheel carriage, so called or known by the name of a coach, shall be used and enjoyed by the said Sukey Modish, his intended wife," (pray mind that, Mr. Idler,) "at such times and in such manner as she the said Sukey Modish shall think fit and convenient."

Such, Mr. Idler, is the agreement my passionate admirer entered into; and what the dear frugal husband calls a performance of it remains to be described. Soon after the ceremony of signing and sealing was over, our wedding-clothes being sent home, and, in short, every thing in readiness except the coach, my own shadow was scarcely more constant than my passionate lover in his attendance on me: wearied by his perpetual importunities for what he called a completion of his bliss, I consented to make him happy; in a few days I gave him my hand, and, attended by Hymen in his saffron robes, retired to a country-seat of my husband's, where the honey-moon flew over our heads ere we had time to recollect ourselves, or think of our engagements in town. Well, to town we came, and you may be sure, Sir, I expected to step into my coach on my arrival here; but what was my surprise and disappointment, when, instead of this, he began to sound in my ears, "That the interest of money was low, very low; and what a terrible thing it was to be incumbered with a little regiment of servants in these hard times!" I could easily perceive what all this tended to, but would not seem to understand him; which made it highly necessary for Mr. Savecharges to explain himself more intelligibly; to harp upon and protest he dreaded the expense of keeping a coach. And truly, for his part, he could not, conceive how the pleasure resulting from such a convenience could be any way adequate to the heavy expense attending it. I now thought it high time to speak with equal plainness, and told him, as the fortune I brought fairly entitled me to ride in my own coach, and as I was sensible his circumstances would very well afford it, he must pardon me if I insisted on a performance of his agreement.

I appeal to you, Mr. Idler, whether any thing could be more civil, more complaisant, than this? And, would you believe it, the creature in return a few days after, accosted me, in an offended tone, with "Madam, I can now tell you your coach is ready; and since you are so passionately fond of one I intend you the honour of keeping a pair of horses.—You insisted upon having an article of pin-money, and horses are no part of my agreement." Base, designing wretch!—I beg your pardon, Mr. Idler, the very recital of such mean, ungentleman-like behaviour fires my blood, and lights up a flame within me. But hence, thou worst of monsters, ill-timed Rage, and let me not spoil my cause for want of temper.

Now, though I am convinced I might make a worse use of part of my pin-money, than by extending my bounty towards the support of so useful a part of the brute creation; yet, like a true-born Englishwoman, I am so tenacious of my rights and privileges, and moreover so good a friend to the gentlemen of the law, that I protest, Mr. Idler, sooner than tamely give up the point, and be quibbled out of my right, I will receive my pin-money, as it were, with one hand, and pay it to them with the other; provided they will give me, or, which is the same thing, my trustees, encouragement to commence a suit against this dear, frugal husband of mine.

And of this I can't have the least shadow of doubt, inasmuch as I have been told by very good authority, it is some way or other laid down as a rule, "That whenever the law doth give any thing to one, it giveth impliedly whatever is necessary for the taking and enjoying the same."* Now, I would gladly know what

* Coke on Lyttelton.

enjoyment I, or any lady in the kingdom, can have of a coach without horses? The answer is obvious—None at all! For as Serjeant Catlyne very wisely observes, "Though a coach has wheels, to the end it may thereby and by virtue thereof be enabled to move; yet in point of utility it may as well have none, if they are not put in motion by means of its vital parts, that is, the horses."

And therefore, Sir, I humbly hope you and the learned in the law will be of opinion, that two certain animals, or quadruped creatures, commonly called or known by the name of horses, ought to be annexed to, and go along with the coach.

Suckey Savecharges.

No. 55.] Saturday, May 5, 1759.

Mr. Idler,

I have taken the liberty of laying before you my complaint, and desiring advice or consolation with the greater confidence, because I believe many other writers have suffered the same indignities with myself, and hope my quarrel will be regarded by you and your readers as the common cause of literature.

Having been long a student, I thought myself qualified in time to become an author. My inquiries have been much diversified and far extended, and not finding my genius directing me by irresistible impulse to any particular subject, I deliberated three years which part of knowledge to illustrate by my labours. Choice is more often determined by accident than by reason: I walked abroad one morning with a curious lady, and by her inquiries and observations was incited to write the natural history of the country in which I reside.

Natural history is no work for one that loves his chair or his bed. Speculation may be pursued on a soft couch, but nature must be observed in the open air. I have collected materials with indefatigable pertinacity. I have gathered glow-worms in the evening, and snails in the morning; I have seen the daisy close and open; I have heard the owl shriek at midnight, and hunted insects in the heat of noon.

Seven years I was employed in collecting animals and vegetables, and then found that my design was yet imperfect. The subterranean treasures of the place had been passed unobserved, and another year was to be spent in mines and coal-pits. What I had already done supplied a sufficient motive to do more. I acquainted myself with the black inhabitants of mettallic caverns, and, in defiance of damps and floods, wandered through the gloomy labyrinths, and gathered fossils from every fissure.

At last I began to write, and as I finished any section of my book, read it to such of my friends as were most skillful in the matter which it treated. None of them were satisfied; one disliked the disposition of the parts, another the colours of the style; one advised me to enlarge another to abridge. I resolved to read no more, but to take my own way and write on, for by consultation I only perplexed my thoughts and retarded my work.

The book was at last finished, and I did not doubt but my labour would be repaid by profit and my ambition satisfied with honours. I considered that natural history is neither temporary nor local, and that though I limited my inquiries to my own country, yet every part of the earth has productions common to all the rest. Civil history may be partially studied, the revolutions of one nation may be neglected by another; but after that in which all have an interest, all must be inquisitive. No man can have sunk so far into stupidity as not to consider the properties of the ground on which he walks, of the plants on which he feeds, or the animals that delight his ear, or amuse his eye: and therefore I computed that universal curiosity would call for many editions of my book, and that in five years I should gain fifteen thousand pounds by the sale of thirty thousand copies.

When I began to write, I insured the house; and suffered the utmost solicitude when I entrusted my book to the carrier, though I had secured it against mischances by lodging two transcripts in different places. At my arrival, I expected that the patrons of learning would contend for the honour of a dedication, and resolved to maintain the dignity of letters by a haughty contempt of pecuniary solicitations.

I took lodgings near the house of the Royal Society, and expected every morning a visit from the president. I walked in the Park, and wondered that I overheard no mention of the great naturalist. At last I visited a noble earl, and told him of my work: he answered, that he was under an engagement never to subscribe. I was angry to have that refused which I did not mean to ask, and concealed my design of making him immortal. I went next day to another, and, in resentment of my late affront, offered to prefix his name to my new book. He said, coldly, that "he did not understand those things;" another thought "there were too many books;" and another would "talk with me when the races were over."

Being amazed to find a man of learning so indecently slighted, I resolved to indulge the philosophical pride of retirement and independence. I then sent to some of the principal booksellers the plan of my book, and bespoke a large room in the next tavern, that I might more commodiously see them together, and enjoy the contest, while they were outbidding one another. I drank my coffee, and yet nobody was come; at last I received a note from one, to tell me that he was going out of town; and from another, that natural history was out of his way. At last there came a grave man, who desired to see the work, and without opening it told me, that a book of that size "would never do."

I then condescended to step into shops, and mentioned my work to the masters. Some never dealt with authors; others had their hands full; some never had known such a dead time; others had lost by all that they had published for the last twelvemonth. One offered to print

my work, if I could procure subscriptions for five hundred, and would allow me two hundred copies for my property. I lost my patience, and gave him a kick; for which he has indicted me.

I can easily perceive that there is a combination among them to defeat my expectations; and I find it so general, that I am sure it must have been long concerted. I suppose some of my friends, to whom I read the first part, gave notice of my design, and, perhaps sold the treacherous intelligence at a higher price than the fraudulence of trade will now allow me for my book.

Inform me, Mr. Idler, what I must do; where must knowledge and industry find their recompense, thus neglected by the high and cheated by the low? I sometimes resolve to print my book at my own expense, and, like the Sibyl, double the price; and sometimes am tempted in emulation of Raleigh, to throw it into the fire, and leave this sordid generation to the curses of posterity. Tell me, dear Idler, what I shall do.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 56.] Saturday, May 12, 1759.

There is such difference between the pursuits of men, that one part of the inhabitants of a great city lives to little other purpose than to wonder at the rest. Some have hopes and fears, wishes and aversions, which never enter into the thoughts of others, and inquiry is laboriously exerted to gain that which those who possess it are ready to throw away.

To those who are accustomed to value every thing by its use, and have no such superfluity of time or money as may prompt them to unnatural wants or capricious emulations, nothing appears more improbable or extravagant than the love of curiosities, or that desire of accumulating trifles, which distinguishes many by whom no other distinction could have ever been obtained.

He that has lived without knowing to what height desire may be raised by vanity, with what rapture baubles are snatched out of the hands of rival collectors, how the eagerness of one raises eagerness in another, and one worthless purchase makes a second necessary, may, by passing a few hours at an auction, learn more than can be shown by many volumes of maxims or essays.

The advertisement of a sale is a signal which at once puts a thousand hearts in motion, and brings contenders from every part to the scene of distribution. He that had resolved to buy no more, feels his constancy subdued; there is now something in the catalogue which completes his cabinet, and he was never before able to find. He whose sober reflections inform him, that of adding collection to collection there is no end, and that it is wise to leave early that which must be imperfect at last, yet cannot withhold himself from coming to see what it is that brings so many together, and when he comes is soon overpowered by his habitual passion; he is attracted by rarity, seduced by example, and inflamed by competition.

While the stores of pride and happiness are surveyed, one looks with longing eyes and gloomy countenance on that which he despairs to gain from a rich bidder; another keeps his eye with care from settling too long on that which he most earnestly desires; and another, with more art than virtue, depreciates that which he values most, in hope to have it at an easy rate.

The novice is often surprised to see what minute and unimportant discriminations increase or diminish value. An irregular contortion of a turbinated shell, which common eyes pass unregarded, will ten times treble its price in the imagination of philosophers. Beauty is far from operating upon collectors as upon low and vulgar minds, even where beauty might be thought the only quality that could deserve notice. Among the shells that please by their variety of colours, if one can be found accidentally deformed by a cloudy spot, it is boasted as the pride of the collection. China is sometimes purchased for little less than its weight in gold, only because it is old, though neither less brittle nor better painted than the modern; and brown china is caught up with ecstacy, though no reason can be imagined for which it should be preferred to common vessels of common clay.

The fate of prints and coins is equally inexplicable. Some prints are treasured up as inestimably valuable, because the impression was made before the plate was finished. Of coins, the price rises not from the purity of the metal, the excellence of the workmanship, the elegance of the legend, or the chronological use. A piece of which neither the inscription can be read, nor the face distinguished, if there remain of it but enough to show that it is rare, will be sought by contending nations, and dignify the treasury in which it shall be shown.

Whether this curiosity, so barren of immediate advantage, and so liable to depravation, does more harm or good, is not easily decided. Its harm is apparent at the first view. It fills the mind with trifling ambition; fixes the attention upon things which have seldom any tendency towards virtue or wisdom; employs in idle inquiries the time that is given for better purposes; and often ends in mean and dishonest practices, when desire increases by indulgence beyond the power of honest gratification.

These are the effects of curiosity in excess; but what passion in excess will not become vicious? All indifferent qualities and practices are bad if they are compared with those which are good, and good if they are opposed to those that are bad. The pride or the pleasure of making collections if it be restrained by prudence and morality, produces a pleasing remission after more laborious studies; furnishes an amusement not wholly unprofitable for that part of life, the greater part of many lives, which would otherwise be lost in idleness or vice; it produces a useful traffic between the industry of indigence and the

curiosity of wealth; it brings many things to notice that would be neglected, and, by fixing the thoughts upon intellectual pleasures, resists the natural encroachments of sensuality, and maintains the mind in her lawful superiority.

No. 57.] Saturday, May 19, 1759.

Prudence is of more frequent use than any other intellectual quality; it is exerted on slight occasions, and called into act by the cursory business of common life.

Whatever is universally necessary, has been granted to mankind on easy terms. Prudence, as it is always wanted, is without great difficulty obtained. It requires neither extensive view nor profound search, but forces itself by spontaneous impulse upon a mind neither great nor busy, neither engrossed by vast designs, nor distracted by multiplicity of attention.

Prudence operates on life in the same manner as rules on composition: it produces vigilance rather than elevation; rather prevents loss than procures advantage; and often escapes miscarriages, but seldom reaches either power or honour. It quenches that ardour of enterprise by which every thing is done that can claim praise or admiration; and represses that generous temerity which often fails and often succeeds. Rules may obviate faults but can never confer beauties; and prudence keeps life safe but does not often make it happy. The world is not amazed with prodigies of excellence, but when wit tramples upon rules, and magnanimity breaks the chains of prudence.

One of the most prudent of all that have fallen within my observation, is my old companion Sophron, who has passed through the world in quiet, by perpetual adherence to a few plain maxims, and wonders how contention and distress can so often happen.

The first principle of Sophron is to run no hazards. Though he loves money, he is of opinion that frugality is a more certain source of riches than industry. It is to no purpos that any prospect of large profit is set before him; he believes little about futurity, and does not love to trust his money out of his sight, for nobody knows what may happen. He has a small estate, which he lets at the old rent, because "it is better to have a little than nothing;" but he rigorously demands payment on the stated day, for he that cannot pay one quarter, cannot pay two." If he is told of any improvements in agriculture, he likes the old way, has observed that changes very seldom answer expectation; is of opinion that our forefathers knew how to till the ground as well as we; and concludes with an argument that nothing can overpower, that the expense of planting and fencing is immediate, and the advantage distant, and that "he is no wise man who will quit a certainty for an uncertainty."

Another of Sophron's rules is "to mind no business but his own." In the state he is of no party; but hears and speaks of public affairs with the same coldness as of the administration of some ancient republic. If any flagrant act of fraud or oppression is mentioned, he hopes "that all is not true that is told;" if misconduct or corruption puts the nation in a flame, he hopes that "every man means well." At elections he leaves his dependents to their own choice, and declines to vote himself, for every candidate is a good man, whom he is unwilling to oppose or offend.

If disputes happen among his neighbours he observes an invariable and cold neutrality. His punctuality has gained him the reputation of honesty, and his caution that of wisdom; and few would refuse to refer their claims to his award. He might have prevented many expensive law-suits, and quenched many a feud in its first smoke; but always refuses the office of arbitration, because he must decide against one or the other.

With the affairs of other families he is always unacquainted. He sees estates bought and sold, squandered and increased, without praising the economist, or censuring the spendthrift. He never courts the rising lest they should fall; nor insults the fallen lest they should rise again. His caution has the appearance of virtue, and all who do not want his help praise his benevolence; but if any man solicits his assistance, he has just sent away all his money; and, when the petitioner is gone, declares to his family that he is sorry for his misfortunes, has always looked upon him with particular kindness, and therefore could not lend him money, lest he should destroy their friendship by the necessity of enforcing payment.

Of domestic misfortunes he has never heard. When he is told the hundredth time of a gentleman's daughter who has married the coachman, he lifts up his hands with astonishment, for he always thought her a very sober girl. When nuptial quarrels, after having filled the country with talk and laughter, at last end in separation, he never can conceive how it happened, for he looked upon them as a happy couple.

If his advice is asked, he never gives any particular direction, because events are uncertain, and he will bring no blame upon himself, but he takes the consulter tenderly by the hand, tells him he makes his case his own, and advises him not to act rashly, but to weigh the reasons on both sides; observes that a man may be as easily too hasty as too slow, and that as many fail by doing too much as too little; that "a wise man has two ears and one tongue;" and "that little said is soon mended;" that he could tell him this and that, but that after all every man is the best judge of his own affairs.

With this some are satisfied, and go home with great reverence of Sophron's wisdom; and none are offended, because every one is left in full possession of his own opinion.

Sophron gives no characters. It is equally vain to tell him of vice and virtue; for he has remarked, that no man likes to be censured.

and that very few are delighted with the praises of another. He has a few terms which he uses to all alike. With respect to fortune, he believes every family to be in good circumstances; he never exalts any understanding by lavish praise, yet he meets with none but very sensible people. Every man is honest and hearty; and every woman is a good creature.

Thus Sophron creeps along, neither loved nor hated, neither favoured nor opposed; he has never attempted to grow rich, for fear of growing poor: and has raised no friends, for fear of making enemies.

No. 58.] Saturday, May 26, 1759.

Pleasure is very seldom found where it is sought. Our bright blazes of gladness are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks. The flowers which scatter their odours from time to time in the paths of life, grow up without culture from seed scattered by chance.

Nothing is more hopeless than a scheme of merriment. Wits and humourists are brought together from distant quarters by preconcerted invitations; they come attended by their admirers, prepared to laugh and to applaud; they gaze a while on each other, ashamed to be silent, and afraid to speak; every man is discontented with himself, grows angry with those that give him pain, and resolves that he will contribute nothing to the merriment of such worthless company. Wine inflames the general malignity, and changes sullenness to petulance, till at last none can bear any longer the presence of the rest. They retire to vent their indignation in safer places, where they are heard with attention; their importance is restored, they recover their good humour, and gladden the night with wit and jocularity.

Merriment is always the effect of a sudden impression. The jest which is expected is already destroyed. The most active imagination will be sometimes torpid under the frigid influence of melancholy, and sometimes occasions will be wanting to tempt the mind, however volatile, to sallies and excursions. Nothing was ever said with uncommon felicity, but by the co-operation of chance, and therefore, wit as well as valour must be content to share its honours with fortune.

All other pleasures are equally uncertain; the general remedy of uneasiness is change of place; almost every one has some journey of pleasure in his mind, with which he flatters his expectation. He that travels in theory has no inconvenience; he has shade and sunshine at his disposal, and wherever he alights finds tables of plenty and looks of gaiety. These ideas are indulged till the day of departure arrives, the chaise is called, and the progress of happiness begins.

A few miles teach him the fallacies of imagination. The road is dusty, the air is sultry, the horses are sluggish, and the postillion brutal. He longs for the time of dinner, that he may eat and rest. The inn is crowded, his orders are neglected, and nothing remains but that he devour in haste what the cook has spoiled, and drive on in quest of better entertainment. He finds at night a more commodious house, but the best is always worse than he expected.

He at last enters his native province, and resolves to feast his mind with the conversation of his old friends and the recollection of juvenile frolics. He stops at the house of his friend, whom he designs to overpower with pleasure by the unexpected interview. He is not known till he tells his name, and revives the memory of himself by a gradual explanation. He is then coldly received and ceremoniously feasted. He hastes away to another, whom his affairs have called to a distant place, and having seen the empty house, goes away disgusted, by a disappointment which could not be intended because it could be foreseen. At the next house he finds every face clouded with misfortune, and is regarded with malevolence as an unreasonable intruder, who comes not to visit but to insult them.

It is seldom that we find either men or places such as we expect them. He that has pictured a prospect upon his fancy, will receive little pleasure from his eyes; he that has anticipated the conversation of a wit, will wonder to what prejudice he owes his reputation. Yet it is necessary to hope, though hope should always be deluded; for hope itself is happiness, and its frustrations, however frequent, are yet less dreadful than its extinction.

No. 59.] Saturday, June 2, 1759.

In the common enjoyments of life, we cannot very liberally indulge the present hour, but by anticipating part of the pleasure which might have relieved the tediousness of another day; and any uncommon exertion of strength, or perseverance in labour, is succeeded by a long interval of languor and weariness. Whatever advantage we snatch beyond the certain portion allotted us by nature, is like money spent before it is due, which at the time of regular payment will be missed and regretted.

Fame, like all other things which are supposed to give or to increase happiness, is dispensed with the same equality of distribution. He that is loudly praised will be clamorously censured; he that rises hastly into fame will be in danger of sinking suddenly into oblivion.

Of many writers who filled their age with wonder, and whose names we find celebrated in the books of their contemporaries, the works are now no longer to be seen, or are seen only amidst the lumber of libraries which are seldom visited, where they lie only to show the deceitfulness of hope, and the uncertainty of honour.

Of the decline of reputation many causes may be assigned. It is commonly lost because it never was deserved; and was conferred at first, not by the suffrage of criticism, but by the fondness of friendship, or servility of flattery. The great and popular are very freely applauded; but all soon grow weary of echo

ing to each other a name which has no other claim to notice, but that many mouths are pronouncing it at once.

But many have lost the final reward of their labours because they were too hasty to enjoy it. They have laid hold on recent occurrences, and eminent names, and delighted their readers with allusions and remarks, in which all were interested, and to which all therefore were attentive. But the effect ceased with its cause; the time quickly came when new events drove the former from memory, when the vicissitudes of the world brought new hopes and fears, transferred the love and hatred of the public to other agents, and the writer, whose works were no longer assisted by gratitude, or resentment, was left to the cold regard of idle curiosity.

He that writes upon general principles, or delivers universal truths, may hope to be often read, because his work will be equally useful at all times, and in every country; but he cannot expect it to be received with eagerness, or to spread with rapidity, because desire can have no particular stimulation; that which is to be loved long must be loved with reason rather than with passion. He that lays out his labours upon temporary subjects, easily finds readers, and quickly loses them; for, what should make the book valued when its subject is no more?

These observations will show the reason why the poem of Hudibras is almost forgotten, however embellished with sentiments and diversified with allusions, however bright with wit, and however solid with truth. The hypocrisy which it detected, and the folly which it ridiculed, have long vanished from public notice. Those who had felt the mischief of discord, and the tyranny of usurpation, read it with rapture, for every line brought back to memory something known, and to gratified resentment by the just censure of something hated. But the book which was once quoted by princes, and which supplied conversation to all the assemblies of the gay and witty, is now seldom mentioned, and even by those that affect to mention it is seldom read. So vainly is wit lavished upon fugitive topics, so little can architecture secure duration when the ground is false.

No. 60.] SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1759.

CRITICISM is a study by which men grow important and formidable at a very small expense. The power of invention has been conferred by nature upon few, and the labour of learning those sciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of a Critic.

I hope it will give comfort to great numbers who are passing through the world in obscurity, when I inform them how easily distinction may be obtained. All the other powers of literature are coy and haughty, they must be long courted, and at last are not always gained; but Criticism is a goddess easy of access and forward of advance; who will meet the slow, and encourage the timorous; the want of meaning she supplies with words, and the want of spirit she recompenses with malignity.

This profession has one recommendation peculiar to itself, that it gives vent to malignity without real mischief. No genius was ever blasted by the breath of critics. The poison which, if confined, would have burst the heart, fumes away in empty hisses, and malice is set at ease with very little danger to merit. The critic is the only man whose triumph is without another's pain, and whose greatness does not rise upon another's ruin.

To a study at once so easy and so reputable, so malicious and so harmless, it cannot be necessary to invite my readers by a long or laboured exhortation; it is sufficient, since all would be critics if they could, to show by one eminent example that all can be critics if they will.

Dick Minim, after the common course of puerile studies, in which he was no great proficient, was put an apprentice to a brewer, with whom he had lived two years, when his uncle died in the city, and left him a large fortune in the stocks. Dick had for six months before used the company of the lower players, of whom he had learned to scorn a trade, and, being now at liberty to follow his genius, he resolved to be a man of wit and humour. That he might be properly initiated in his new character, he frequented the coffee-houses near the theatres, where he listened very diligently, day after day to those who talked of language and sentiments, and unities and catastrophes, till by slow degrees he began to think that he understood something of the stage, and hoped in time to talk himself.

But he did not trust so much to natural sagacity as wholly to neglect the help of books. When the theatres were shut, he retired to Richmond with a few select writers, whose opinions he impressed upon his memory by unwearied diligence; and, when he returned with other wits to the town, was able to tell, in very proper phrases, that the chief business of art is to follow nature; that a perfect writer is not to be expected, because genius decays as judgment increases; that the great art is the art of blotting; and that, according to the rule of Horace, every piece should be kept nine years.

Of the great authors he now began to display the characters, laying down as a universal position, that all had beauties and defects. His opinion was, that Shakespeare, committing himself wholly to the impulse of nature, wanted that correctness which learning would have given him; and that Jonson, trusting to learning, did not sufficiently cast his eye on nature. He blamed the stanza of Spenser, and could not bear the hexameters of Sidney. Denham and Waller he held the first reformers of English numbers; and thought that if Waller could have obtained the strength of Denham, or Denham the sweetness of Waller

there had been nothing wanting to complete a poet. He often expressed his commiseration of Dryden's poverty, and his indignation at the age which suffered him to write for bread; he repeated with rapture the first lines of *All for Love*, but wondered at the corruption of taste which could bear any thing so unnatural as rhyming tragedies. In Otway he found uncommon powers of moving the passions, but was disgusted by his general negligence, and blamed him for making a conspirator his hero; and never concluded his disquisition without remarking how happily the sound of the clock is made to alarm the audience. Southern would have been his favourite, but that he mixes comic with tragic scenes, intercepts the natural course of the passions, and fills the mind with a wild confusion of mirth a melancholy. The versification of Rowe he thought too melodious for the stage, and too little varied in different passions. He made it the great fault of Congreve, that all his persons were wits, and that he always wrote with more art than nature. He considered Cato rather as a poem than a play, and allowed Addison to be the complete master of allegory and grave humour, but paid no great deference to him as a critic. He thought the chief merit of Prior was in his easy tales and lighter poems, though he allowed that his Solomon had many noble sentiments elegantly expressed. In Swift he discovered an inimitable vein of irony, and an easiness which all would hope and few would attain. Pope he was inclined to degrade from a poet to a versifier, and thought his numbers rather luscious than sweet. He often lamented the neglect of Phædra and Hippolitus, and wished to see the stage under better regulation.

These assertions passed commonly uncontradicted; and if now and then an opponent started up, he was quickly repressed by the suffrages of the company, and Minim went away from every dispute with elation of heart and increase of confidence.

He now grew conscious of his abilities, and began to talk of the present state of dramatic poetry; wondered what was become of the comic genius which supplied our ancestors with wit and pleasantry, and why no writer could be found that durst now venture beyond a farce. He saw no reason for thinking that the vein of humour was exhausted, since we live in a country where liberty suffers every character to spread itself to its utmost bulk, and which, therefore, produces more originals than all the rest of the world together. Of tragedy he concluded business to be the soul, and yet often hinted that love predominates too much upon the modern stage.

He was now an acknowledged critic, and had his own seat in a coffee-house, and headed a party in the pit. Minim has more vanity than ill nature, and seldom desires to do much mischief; he will perhaps murmur a little in the ear of him that sits next him, but endeavours to influence the audience to favour, by clapping when an actor exclaims, "Ye gods!" or laments the misery of his country.

By degrees he was admitted to rehearsals; and many of his friends are of opinion, that our present poets are indebted to him for their happiest thoughts; by his contrivance the bell was rung twice in Barbarossa, and by his persuasion the author of Cleone concluded his play with a couplet; for what can be more absurd, said Minim, than that part of a play should be rhymed, and part written in blank verse; and by what acquisition of faculties is the speaker, who never could find rhymes before, enabled to rhyme at the conclusion of an act?

He is the great investigator of hidden beauties, and is particularly delighted when he finds *the sound an echo to the sense*. He has read all our poets with particular attention to this delicacy of versification, and wonders at the supineness with which their works have been hitherto perused, so that no man has found the sound of a drum in this distich.

> "When pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
> Was beat with fist instead of a stick;"

and that the wonderful lines upon honour and a bubble, have hitherto passed without notice:

> "Honour is like the glassy bubble,
> Which costs philosophers such trouble:
> Where, one part crack'd, the whole does fly,
> And wits are crack'd to find out why.

In these verses, says Minim, we have two striking accommodations of the sound to the sense. It is impossible to utter the two lines emphatically without an act like that which they describe; bubble and trouble causing a momentary inflation of the cheeks by the retention of the breath, which is afterwards forcibly emitted, as in the practice of blowing bubbles. But the greatest excellence is in the third line, which is cracked in the middle to express a crack, and then shivers into monosyllables. Yet hath this diamond lain neglected with common stones, and among the innumerable admirers of Hudibras the observation of this superlative passage has been reserved for the sagacity of Minim.

No. 61.] Saturday, June 16, 1759.

Mr. Minim had now advanced himself to the zenith of critical reputation; when he was in the pit, every eye in the boxes was fixed upon him; when he entered his coffee-house, he was surrounded by circles of candidates, who passed their noviciate of literature under his tuition: his opinion was asked by all who had no opinion of their own, and yet loved to debate and decide; and no composition was supposed to pass in safety to posterity till it had been secured by Minim's approbation.

Minim professes great admiration of the wisdom and munificence by which the academies of the continent were raised; and often wishes for some standard of taste, for some tribunal, to which merit may appeal from caprice, prejudice, and malignity. He has formed a plan for an academy of criticism, where every work of imagination may be read before it is printed, and

which shall authoritively direct the theatres what pieces to receive or reject, to exclude or to revive.

Such an institution would, in Dick's opinion, spread the fame of English literature over Europe, and make London the metropolis of elegance and politeness, the place to which the learned and ingenious of all countries would repair for instruction and improvement, and where nothing would any longer be applauded or endured that was not conformed to the nicest rules, and finished with the highest elegance.

Till some happy conjunction of the planets shall dispose our princes or ministers to make themselves immortal by such an academy, Minim contents himself to preside four nights in a week in a critical society selected by himself, where he is heard without contradiction, and whence his judgment is disseminated through the great vulgar and the small.

When he is placed in the chair of criticism, he declares loudly for the noble simplicity of our ancestors, in opposition to the petty refinements, and ornamental luxuriance. Sometimes he is sunk in despair, and perceives false delicacy daily gaining ground, and sometimes brightens his countenance with a gleam of hope, and predicts the revival of the true sublime. He then fulminates his loudest censures against the monkish barbarity of rhyme; wonders how beings that pretend to reason can be pleased with one line always ending like another; tells how unjustly and unnaturally sense is sacrificed to sound; how often the best thoughts are mangled by the necessity of confining or extending them to the dimensions of a couplet; and rejoices that genius has, in our days, shaken of the shackles which had encumbered it so long. Yet he allows that rhyme may sometimes be borne if the lines be often broken, and the pauses judiciously diversified.

From blank verse he makes an easy transition to Milton, whom he produces as an example of the slow advance of lasting reputation. Milton is the only writer in whose books Minim can read for ever without weariness. What cause is it that exempts this pleasure from satiety he has long and diligently inquired, and believes it to consist in the perpetual variation of the numbers, by which the ear is gratified and the attention awakened. The lines that are commonly thought rugged and and unmusical he conceives to have been written to temper the melodious luxury of the rest, or to express things by a proper cadence: for he scarcely finds a verse that has not this favourite beauty; he declares that he could shiver in a hot-house when he reads that

> "the ground
> Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire;

and that when Milton bewails his blindness, the verse,

> "So thick a drop serene has quench'd these orbs,"

has, he knows not how, something that strikes him with an obscure sensation like that which he fancies would be felt from the sound of darkness.

Minim is not so confident of his rules of judgment as not very eagerly to catch new light from the name of the author. He is commonly so prudent as to spare those whom he cannot resist, unless, as will sometimes happen, he finds the public combined against them. But a fresh pretender to fame he is strongly inclined to censure, till his own honour requires that he commend him. Till he knows the success of a composition he intrenches himself in general terms; there are some new thoughts and beautiful passages, but there is likewise much which he would have advised the author to expunge. He has several favourite epithets, of which he has never settled the meaning, but which are very commonly applied to books which he has not read, or cannot understand. One is manly, another is dry, another stiff, and another flimsy: sometimes he discovers delicacy of style, and sometimes meets with strange expressions.

He is never so great nor so happy, as when a youth of promising parts is brought to receive his directions for the prosecution of his studies. He then puts on a very serious air; he advises the pupil to read none but the best authors, and, when he finds one congenial to his own mind, to study his beauties, but avoid his faults, and, when he sits down to write, to consider how his favourite author would think at the present time on the present occasion. He exhorts him to catch those moments when he finds his thoughts expanded and his genius exalted, but to take care lest imagination hurry him beyond the bounds of nature. He holds diligence the mother of success; yet enjoins him with great earnestness, not to read more than he can digest, and not to confuse his mind, by pursuing studies of contrary tendencies. He tells him, that every man has his genius, and that Cicero could never be a poet. The boy retires illuminated, resolves to follow his genius, and to think how Milton would have thought: and Minim feasts upon his own beneficence till another day brings another pupil.

No. 62.] SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

AN opinion prevails almost universally in the world, that he who has money has every thing. This is not a modern paradox, or the tenet of a small and obscure sect, but a persuasion which appears to have operated upon most minds in all ages, and which is supported by authorities so numerous and so cogent, that nothing but long experience could have given me confidence to question its truth.

But experience is the test by which all the philosophers of the present age agree, that speculation must be tried; and I may therefore

be allowed to doubt the power of money, since I have been a long time rich, and I have not yet found that riches can make me happy.

My father was a farmer neither wealthy nor indigent, who gave me a better education than was suitable to my birth, because my uncle in the city designed me for his heir and desired that I might be bred a gentleman. My uncle's wealth was the perpetual subject of conversation in the house; and when any little misfortune befel us, or any mortification dejected us, my father always exhorted me to hold up my head, for my uncle would never marry.

My uncle, indeed, kept his promise. Having his mind completely busied between his warehouse and the Change, he felt no tediousness of life, nor any want of domestic amusements. When my father died, he received me kindly; but after a few months finding no great pleasure in the conversation of each other, we parted; and he remitted me a small annuity, on which I lived a quiet and studious life, without any wish to grow great by the death of my benefactor.

But though I never suffered any malignant impatience to take holds on my mind, I could not forbear sometimes to imagine to myself the pleasure of being rich; and when I read of diversions and magnificence, resolved to try, when time should put the trial in my power, what pleasure they could afford.

My uncle, in the latter spring of his life, when his ruddy cheek and his firm nerves promised him a long and healthy age, died of an apoplexy. His death gave me neither joy nor sorrow. He did me good, and I regarded him with gratitude; but I could not please him, and therefore could not love him.

He had the policy of little minds who love to surprise: and having always represented his fortune as less than it was, had, I suppose, often gratified himself with thinking, how I should be delighted to find myself twice as rich as I expected. My wealth was such as exceeded all the schemes of expense which I had formed; and I soon began to expand my thoughts and look round me for some purchase of felicity.

The most striking effect of riches is the splendour of dress, which every man has observed to enforce respect, and facilitate reception; and my first desire was to be fine. I sent for a tailor who was employed by the nobility, and ordered such a suit of clothes as I had often looked on with involuntary submission, and am ashamed to remember with what flutters of expectation I waited for the hour when I should issue forth in all the splendour of embroidery. The clothes were brought and for three days I observed many eyes turned towards me as I passed; but I felt myself obstructed in the common intercourse of civility, by an uneasy consciousness of my new appearance; as I thought myself more observed, I was more anxious about my mien and behaviour; and the mien which is formed by care is commonly ridiculous. A short time accustomed me to myself, and my dress was without pain and without pleasure.

For a little while I tried to be a rake, but I began too late; and having by nature no turn for a frolic, was in great danger of ending in a drunkard. A fever, in which not one of my companions paid me a visit, gave me time for reflection. I found that there was no great pleasure in breaking windows and lying in the round-house; and resolved to associate no longer with those whom, though I had treated and bailed them, I could not make friends.

I then changed my measures kept running horses, and had the comfort of seeing my name very often in the news. I had a chesnut horse, the grandson of Childers, who won four plates, and ten by-matches; and a bay filly who carried off the five-years-old plate, and was expected to perform much greater exploits, when my groom broke her wind because I happened to catch him selling oats for beer. This happiness was soon at an end; there was no pleasure when I lost, and when I won I could not much exalt myself by the virtues of my horse. I grew ashamed of the company of jockey-lords, and resolved to spend no more of my time in the stable.

It was now known that I had money, and would spend it, and I passed four months in the company of architects, whose whole business was, to persuade me to build a house. I told them that I had more room than I wanted, but could not get rid of their importunities. A new plan was brought me every morning; till at last my constancy was overpowered, and I began to build. The happiness of building lasted but a little while, for though I love to spend, I hate to be cheated; and I soon found, that to build is to be robbed.

How I proceed in the pursuit of happiness, you shall hear when I find myself disposed to write.

I am, Sir,

TIM. RANGER.

No. 63.] SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1759.

THE natural progress of the works of men is from rudeness to convenience, from convenience to elegance, and from elegance to nicety.

The first labour is enforced by necessity. The savage finds himself incommoded by heat and cold, by rain and wind; he shelters himself in the hollow of a rock and learns to dig a cave where there was none before. He finds the sun and the wind excluded by the thicket, and when the accidents of the chase, or the convenience of pasturage, lead him into more open places, he forms a thicket for himself, by planting stakes at proper distances, and laying branches from one to another.

The next gradation of skill and industry produces a house closed with doors, and divided by partitions; and apartments are multiplied and disposed according to the various degrees of power or invention; improvement succeeds improvement, as he that is freed from a greater evil grows impatient of a less, till ease in time is advanced to pleasure.

The mind set free from the importunities of

natural want, gains leisure to go in search of superfluous gratifications, and adds to the uses of habitation the delights of prospect. Then begins the reign of symmetry; orders of architecture are invented, and one part of the edifice is conformed to another, without any other reason, than that the eye may not be offended.

The passage is very short from elegance to luxury. Ionic and Corinthian columns are soon succeeded by gilt cornices, inlaid floors, and petty ornaments, which show rather the wealth than the taste of the possessor.

Language proceeds, like every thing else, through improvement to degeneracy. The rovers who first take possession of a country, having not many ideas, and those not nicely modified or discriminated, were contented, if by general terms and abrupt sentences they could make their thoughts known to one another; as life begins to be more regulated, and property to become limited, disputes must be decided, and claims adjusted; the differences of things are noted, and distinctness and propriety of expression become necessary. In time, happiness and plenty give rise to curiosity, and the sciences are cultivated for ease and pleasure; to the arts, which are now to be taught, emulation soon adds the art of teaching; and the studious and ambitious contend not only who shall think best, but who shall tell their thoughts in the most pleasing manner.

Then begin the arts of rhetoric and poetry, the regulation of figures, the selection of words, the modulation of periods, the graces of transition, the complication of clauses, and all the delicacies of style and subtilities of composition, useful while they advance perspicuity, and laudable while they increase pleasure, but easily to be refined by needless scrupulosity till they shall more embarrass the writer than assist the reader or delight him.

The first state is commonly antecedent to the practice of writing; the ignorant essays of imperfect diction pass away with the savage generation that uttered them. No nation can trace their language beyond the second period, and even of that it does not often happen that many monuments remain.

The fate of the English tongue is like that of others. We know nothing of the scanty jargon of our barbarous ancestors; but we have specimens of our language when it began to be adapted to civil and religious purposes, and find it such as might naturally be expected, artless and simple, unconnected and concise. The writers seem to have desired little more than to be understood, and perhaps seldom aspired to the praise of pleasing. Their verses were considered chiefly as memorial, and therefore did not differ from prose but by the measure or the rhyme.

In this state, varied a little according to the different purposes or abilities of writers, our language may be said to have continued to the time of Gower, whom Chaucer calls his master, and who, however obscured by his scholar's popularity, seems justly to claim the honour which has hitherto been denied him, of showing his countrymen that something more was to be desired, and that English verse might be exalted into poetry.

From the time of Gower and Chaucer, the English writers have studied elegance, and advanced their language, by successive improvements, to as much harmony as it can easily receive, and as much copiousness as human knowledge has hitherto required. These advances have not been made at all times with the same diligence or the same success. Negligence has suspended the course of improvement, or affectation turned it aside; time has elapsed with little change, or change has been made without amendment. But elegance has been long kept in view with attention as near to constancy as life permits, till every man now endeavours to excel others in accuracy or outshine them in splendour of style, and the danger is, lest care should too soon pass to affectation.

No 64.] Saturday, July 7, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

As nature has made every man desirous of happiness, I flatter myself, that you and your readers cannot but feel some curiosity to know the sequel of my story; for though, by trying the different schemes of pleasure, I have yet found nothing in which I could finally acquiesce; yet the narrative of my attempts will not be wholly without use, since we always approach nearer to truth as we detect more and more varieties of error.

When I had sold my racers, and put the orders of architecture out of my head, my next resolution was to be a fine gentleman. I frequented the polite coffee-houses, grew acquainted with all the men of humour, and gained the right of bowing familiarly to half the nobility. In this new scene of life my great labour was to learn to laugh. I had been used to consider laughter as the effect of merriment; but I soon learned that it is one of the arts of adulation, and, from laughing only to show that I was pleased, I now began to laugh when I wished to please. This was at first very difficult. I sometimes heard the story with dull indifference; and, not exalting myself to merriment by due gradations, burst out suddenly into an awkward noise, which was not always favourably interpreted. Sometimes I was behind the rest of the company, and lost the grace of laughing by delay, and sometimes when I began at the right time was deficient in loudness or in length. But, by diligent imitation of the best models, I attained at last such flexibility of muscles, that I was always a welcome auditor of a story, and got the reputation of a good-natured fellow.

This was something; but much more was to be done, that I might be universally allowed to be a fine gentleman. I appeared at court on all public days; betted at gaming-tables and played at all the routs of eminence.

I went every night to the opera, took a fiddler of disputed merit under my protection, became the head of a musical faction, and had sometimes concerts at my own house. I once thought to have attained the highest rank of elegance, by taking a foreign singer into keeping. But my favourite fiddler contrived to be arrested on the night of a concert, for a finer suit of clothes than I had ever presumed to wear, and I lost all the fame of patronage by refusing to bail him.

My next ambition was to sit for my picture. I spent a whole winter in going from painter to painter, to bespeak a whole length of one, and a half length of another, I talked of nothing but attitudes, draperies, and proper lights; took my friends to see the pictures after every sitting; heard every day of a wonderful performer in crayons and miniature, and sent my pictures to be copied; was told by the judges that they were not like, and was recommended to other artists. At length being not able to please my friends, I grew less pleased myself, and at last resolved to think no more about it.

It was impossible to live in total idleness: and wandering about in search of something to do I was invited to a weekly meeting of virtuosos, and felt myself instantaneously seized with an unextinguishable ardour for all natural curiosities. I ran from auction to auction, became a critic in shells and fossils, bought a *Hortus siccus* of inestimable value, and purchased a secret art of preserving insects, which made my collection the envy of the other philosophers. I found this pleasure mingled with much vexation. All the faults of my life were for nine months circulated through the town with the most active malignity, because I happened to catch a moth of peculiar variegation; and because I once outbid all the lovers of shells, and carried off a nautilus, it was hinted that the validity of my uncle's will ought to be disputed. I will not deny that I was very proud both of the moth and of the shell, and gratified myself with the envy of my companions, and perhaps more than became a benevolent being. But in time I grew weary of being hated for that which produced no advantage, gave my shells to children that wanted play-things, and suppressed the art of drying butterflies, because I would not tempt idleness and cruelty to kill them.

I now began to feel life tedious, and wished to store myself with friends, with whom I might grow old in the interchange of benevolence. I had observed that popularity was most easily gained by an open table, and therefore hired a French cook, furnished my sideboard with great magnificence, filled my cellar with wines of pompous appellations, bought every thing that was dear before it was good, and invited all those who were most famous for judging of a dinner. In three weeks my cook gave me warning, and, upon inquiry told me that Lord Queasy, who dined with me the day before, had sent him an offer of double wages. My pride prevailed: I raised his wages, and invited his lordship to another feast. I love plain meat, and was therefore soon weary of spreading a table of which I could not partake. I found that my guests, when they went away, criticised their entertainment and censured my profusion; my cook thought himself necessary, and took upon him the direction of the house; and I could not rid myself of flatterers, or break from slavery, but by shutting up my house, and declaring my resolution to live in lodgings.

After all this, tell me, dear Idler, what I must do next; I have health, I have money, and I hope that I have understanding; yet, with all these, I have never been able to pass a single day which I did not wish at an end before sunset. Tell me, dear Idler, what I shall do.

I am,

Your humble servant,

TIM. RANGER.

No. 65.] SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1759.

THE sequel of Clarendon's history, at last happily published, is an accession to English literature equally agreeable to the admirers of elegance and the lovers of truth; many doubtful facts may now be ascertained, and many questions, after long debate, may be determined by decisive authority. He that records transactions in which himself was engaged has not only an opportunity of knowing innumerable particulars which escape spectators, but has his natural powers exalted by that ardour which always rises at the remembrance of our own importance, and by which every man is enabled to relate his own actions better than another's.

The difficulties through which this work has struggled into light, and the delays with which our hopes have been long mocked, naturally lead the mind to the consideration of the common fate of posthumous compositions.

He who sees himself surrounded by admirers, and whose vanity is hourly feasted with all the luxuries of studied praise, is easily persuaded that his influence will be extended beyond his life; that they who cringe in his presence will reverence his memory, and that those who are proud to be numbered among his friends, will endeavour to vindicate his choice by zeal for his reputation.

With hopes like these, to the executors of Swift was committed the history of the last years of Queen Anne, and to those of Pope, the works which remained unprinted in his closet. The performances of Pope were burnt by those whom he had perhaps selected from all mankind as most likely to publish them; and the history had likewise perished, had not a straggling transcript fallen into busy hands.

The papers left in the closet of Pieresc, supplied his heirs with a whole winter's fuel; and many of the labours of the learned bishop Lloyd were consumed in the kitchen of his descendants.

Some works, indeed, have escaped total destruction, but yet have had reason to lament

the fate of orphans exposed to the frauds of unfaithful guardians. How Hale would have borne the mutilations which his "Pleas of the Crown" have suffered from the editor, they who know his character will easily conceive.

The original copy of Burnet's history, though promised to some public* library, has been never given; and who then can prove the fidelity of the publication, when the authenticity of Clarendon's history, though printed with the sanction of one of the first universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been happily discovered, would, with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into question by the two lowest of all human beings, a scribbler for a party, and a commissioner of excise?

Vanity is often no less mischievous than negligence or dishonesty. He that possesses a valuable manuscript, hopes to raise its esteem by concealment, and delights in the distinction which he imagines himself to obtain by keeping the key of a treasure which he neither uses nor imparts. From him it falls to some other owner, less vain but more negligent, who consider it as useless lumber, and rids himself of the incumbrance.

Yet there are some works which the authors must consign unpublished to posterity, however uncertain be the event, however hopeless be the trust. He that writes the history of his own times, if he adheres steadily to truth, will write that which his own times will not easily endure. He must be content to reposite his book till all private passions shall cease, and love and hatred give way to curiosity.

But many leave the labours of half their life to their executors and to chance, because they will not send them abroad unfinished, and are unable to finish them, having prescribed to themselves such a degree of exactness as human diligence can scarcely attain. "Lloyd," says Burnet, "did not lay out his learning with the same diligence as he laid it in." He was always hesitating and inquiring, raising objections and removing them, and waiting for clearer light and fuller discovery. Baker, after many years passed in biography, left his manuscripts to be buried in a library, because that was imperfect which could never be perfected.

Of these learned men, let those who aspire to the same praise imitate the diligence, and avoid the scrupulosity. Let it be always remembered that life is short, that knowledge is endless, and that many doubts deserve not to be cleared. Let those whom nature and study have qualified to teach mankind, tell us what they have learned while they are yet able to tell it, and trust their reputation only to themselves.

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* It would be proper to reposite, in some public place, the manuscript of Clarendon, which has no escaped all suspicion of unfaithful publication.

No. 66.] Saturday, July 21, 1759

No complaint is more frequently repeated among the learned, than that of the waste made by time among the labours of antiquity. Of those who once filled the civilized world with their renown, nothing is now left but their names which are left only to raise desires that never can be satisfied, and sorrow which never can be comforted.

Had all the writings of the ancients been faithfully delivered down from age to age, had the Alexandrian library been spared, and the Palatine repositories remained unimpaired, how much might we have known of which we are now doomed to be ignorant! how many laborious inquiries, and dark conjectures; how many collations of broken hints, and mutilated passages might have been spared! We should have known the successions of princes, the revolutions of empire, the actions of the great, and opinions of the wise, the laws and constitutions of every state, and the arts by which public grandeur and happiness are acquired and preserved; we should have traced the progress of life, seen colonies from distant regions take possession of European deserts, and troops of savages settled into communities by the desire of keeping what they had acquired; we should have traced the gradations of civility, and travelled upward to the original of things by the light of history, till in remoter time it had glimmered in fable, and at last sunk into darkness.

If the works of imagination had been less diminished, it is likely that all future times might have been supplied with inexhaustible amusement by the fictions of antiquity. The tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides would have shown all the stronger passions in all their diversities; and the comedies of Menander would have furnished all the maxims domestic life. Nothing would have be necessary to mortal wisdom but to have studi these great masters, whose knowledge would have guided doubt, and whose authority would have silenced cavils.

Such are the thoughts that rise in every student, when his curiosity is eluded, and his searches are frustrated; yet it may perhaps be doubted, whether our complaints are not sometimes inconsiderate, and whether we do not imagine more evil than we feel. Of the ancients, enough remains to excite our emulation and direct our endeavours. Many of the works which time has left us, we know to have been those that were most esteemed, and which antiquity itself considered as models; so that, having the originals, we may without much regret lose the imitations. The obscurity which the want of contemporary writers often produces, only darkens single passages, and those commonly of slight importance. The general tendency of every piece may be known: and though that diligence deserves praise which leaves nothing unexamined, yet its miscarriages are not much to be lamented; for the most useful truths are always universal, and unconnected with accidents and customs.

Such is the general conspiracy of human

nature against contemporary merit, that, if we had inherited from antiquity enough to afford employment for the labourious, and amusement for the idle, I know not what room would have been left for modern genius or modern industry; almost every subject would have been pre-occupied, and every style would have been fixed by a precedent from which few would have ventured to depart Every writer would have had a rival, whose superiority was already acknowledged, and to whose fame his work would, even before it was seen, be marked out for a sacrifice.

We see how little the united experience of mankind hath been able to add to the heroic characters displayed by Homer, and how few incidents the fertile imagination of modern Italy has yet produced which may not be found in the Iliad and Odyssey. It is likely that if all the works of the Athenian philosophers had been extant, Malbranche and Locke would have been condemned to be silent readers of the ancient metaphysicians; and it is apparent, that, if the old writers had all remained, the Idler could not have written a disquisition on the loss.

No. 67.] Saturday, July 28, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

In the observations which you have made on the various opinions and pursuits of mankind, you must often, in literary conversations, have met with men who consider dissipation as the great enemy of the intellect; and maintain, that, in proportion as the student keeps himself within the bounds of a settled plan, he will certainly advance in science.

This opinion is, perhaps, generally true; yet when we contemplate the inquisitive nature of the human mind, and its perpetual impatience of all restraint, it may be doubted whether the faculties may not be contracted by confining the attention; and whether it may not sometimes be proper to risk the certainty of little for the chance of much. Acquisitions of knowledge, like blazes of genius, are often fortuitous. Those who had proposed to themselves a methodical course of reading, light by accident on a new book, which seizes their thoughts and kindles their curiosity, and opens an unexpected prospect, to which the way which they had prescribed to themselves would never have conducted them.

To enforce and illustrate my meaning, I have sent you a journal of three days' employment, found among the papers of a late intimate acquaintance; who, as will plainly appear, was a man of vast designs, and of vast performances, though he sometimes designed one thing and performed another. I allow that the Spectator's inimitable productions of this kind may well discourage all subsequent journalists; but as the subject of this is different from that of any which the Spectator has given us, I leave it to you to publish or suppress it.

Mem. The following three days I propose to give up to reading; and intend, after all the delays which have obtruded themselves upon me, to finish my "Essay on the Extent of the Mental Powers;" to revise my "Treatise on Logic;" to begin the "Epic" which I have long projected; to proceed in my persual of the "Scriptures with Grotius's Comment;" and at my leisure to regale myself with the works of classics, ancient and modern, and to finish my "Ode to Astronomy."

Monday. Designed to rise at six, but, by my servant's laziness, my fire was not lighted before eight; when I dropped into a slumber that lasted till nine, at which time I arose, and after breakfast at ten sat down to study, proposing to begin upon my Essay: but, finding occasion to consult a passage in Plato, was absorbed in the persual of the Republic till twelve. I had neglected to forbid company, and now enters Tom Careless, who after half an hour's chat, insisted upon my going with him to enjoy an absurd character, that he had appointed, by an advertisement, to meet him at a particular coffee-house. After we had for some time entertained ourselves with him, we sallied out, designing each to repair his home; but, as it fell out, coming up in the street to a man whose steel by his side declared him a butcher, we overheard him opening an address to a genteelish sort of young lady, whom he walked with: "Miss, though your father is master of a coal-lighter, and you will be a great fortune, 'tis true; yet I wish I may be cut into quarters, if it is not only love, and not lucre of gain, that is my motive for offering terms of marriage." As this lover proceeded in his speech, he misled us the length of three streets, in admiration at the unlimited power of the tender passion that could soften even the heart of a butcher. We then adjourned to a tavern, and from thence to one of the public gardens, where I was regaled with a most amusing variety of men, possessing great talents, so discoloured by affectation, that they only made them eminently ridiculous; shallow things, who, by continual dissipation, had annihilated the few ideas nature had given them, and yet were celebrated for wonderful pretty gentlemen; young ladies extolled for their wit, because they were handsome; illiterate empty women, as well as men, in high life, admired for their knowledge, from their being resolutely positive; and women of real understanding so far from pleasing the polite million, that they frightened them away, and were left solitary. When we quitted this entertaining scene, Tom pressed me irresistibly to sup with him. I reached home at twelve, and then reflected, that though indeed I had, by remarking various characters, improved my insight into human nature, yet still I neglected the studies proposed, and accordingly took up my Treatise on Logic, to give it the intented revisal, but found my spirits too much agitated, and could not forbear a few satirical lines, under the title of "The Evening's Walk."

Tuesday, At breakfast, seeing my "Ode to Astronomy" lying on my desk, I was struck with a train of ideas, that I thought might

contribute to its improvement. I immediately rang my bell to forbid all visitants, when my servant opened the door, with "Sir, Mr. Jeffrey Gape." My cup dropped out of one hand, and my poem out of the other. I could scarcely ask him to sit; he told me he was going to walk, but as there was a likelihood of rain, he would sit with me; he said, he intended at first to have called at Mr. Vacant's, but as he had not seen me a great while, he did not mind coming out of his way to wait on me; I made him a bow, but thanks for the favour stuck in my throat. I asked him if he had been to the coffee-house; he replied, two hours.

Under the oppression of this dull interruption, I sat looking wishfully at the clock; for which, to increase my satisfaction, I had chosen the inscription, "Art is long, and life is short;" exchanging questions and answers at long intervals, and not without some hints that the weather-glass promised fair weather. At half an hour after three he told me he would trespass on me for a dinner, and desired me to send to his house for a bundle of papers, about inclosing a common upon his estate, which he would read to me in the evening. I declared myself busy, and Mr. Gape went away.

Having dined, to compose my chagrin, I took my Virgil, and several other classics, but could not calm my mind, or proceed in my scheme. At about five I laid my hand on a Bible that lay on my table, at first with coldness and insensibility; but was imperceptibly engaged in a close attention to its sublime morality, and felt my heart expanded by warm philanthropy, and exalted to dignity of sentiment. I then censured my too great solicitude, and my disgust conceived at my acquaintance, who had been so far from designing to offend, that he only meant to show kindness and respect. In this strain of mind I wrote "An Essay on Benevolence," and "An Elegy on Sublunary Disappointments." When I had finished these at eleven, I supped and recollected how little I had adhered to my plan, and almost questioned the possibility of pursuing any settled and uniform design; however, I was not so far persuaded of the truth of these suggestions, but that I resolved to try once more at my scheme. As I observed the moon shining through my window, from a calm and bright sky, spangled with innumerable stars, I indulged a pleasing meditation on the splendid scene, and finished my "Ode to Astronomy."

Wednesday. Rose at seven, and employed three hours in perusal of the "Scriptures with Grotius's Comment;" and after breakfast fell into meditation concerning my projected Epic; and being in some doubt as to the particular lives of some heroes, whom I proposed to celebrate, I consulted Bayle and Moreri, and was engaged two hours in examining various lives and characters, but then resolved to go to my employment. When I was seated at my desk, and began to feel the glowing succession of poetical ideas, my servant brought me a letter from a lawyer requiring my instant attendance at Gray's Inn for half an hour. I went full of vexation, and was involved in business till eight at night; and then, being too much fatigued to study, supped, and went to bed.

Here my friend's journal concludes, which perhaps is pretty much a picture of the manner in which many prosecute their studies. I therefore resolved to send it you, imagining, that, if you think it worthy of appearing in your paper, some of your readers may receive entertainment by recognizing a resemblance between my friend's conduct and their own. It must be left to the Idler accurately to ascertain the proper methods of advancing in literature; but this one position, deducible from what has been said above, may, I think, be reasonably asserted, that he who finds himself strongly attracted to any particular study, though it may happen to be out of his proposed scheme, if it is not trifling or vicious, had better continue his application to it, since it is likely that he will with much more ease and expedition, attain that which a warm inclination stimulates him to pursue, than that at which a prescribed law compels him to toil.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 68.] Saturday, Aug. 4, 1759.

Among the studies which have exercised the ingenious and the learned for more than three centuries, none has been more diligently or more successfully cultivated than the art of translation; by which the impediments which bar the way to science, are, in some measure, removed, and the multiplicity of languages becomes less incommodious.

Of every other kind of writing the ancients have left us models which all succeeding ages have laboured to imitate; but translation may justly be claimed by the moderns as their own. In the first ages of the world instruction was commonly oral, and learning traditional, and what was not written could not be translated. When alphabetical writing made the conveyance of opinions and the transmission of events more easy and certain, literature did not flourish in more than one country at once, for distant nations had little commerce with each other; and those few whom curiosity sent abroad in quest of improvement, delivered their acquisitions in their own manner, desirous perhaps to be considered as the inventors of that which they had learned from others.

The Greeks for a time travelled into Egypt, but they translated no books from the Egyptian language; and when the Macedonians had overthrown the empire of Persia, the countries that became subject to Grecian dominion studied only the Grecian literature. The books of the conquered nations, if they had any among them, sunk into oblivion; Greece considered herself as the mistress, if not as the parent of arts; her language contained all that was supposed to be known, and, except the sacred writings of the Old Testament I know

not that the library of Alexandria adopted any thing from a foreign tongue.

The Romans confessed themselves the scholars of the Greeks, and do not appear to have expected what has since happened, that the ignorance of succeeding ages would prefer them to their teachers. Every man, who in Rome aspired to the praise of literature, thought it necessary to learn Greek, and had no need of versions when they could study the originals. Translation, however, was not wholly neglected. Dramatic poems could be understood by the people in no language but their own, and the Romans were sometimes entertained with the tragedies of Euripides and the comedies of Menander. Other works were sometimes attempted; in an old scholiast there is mention of a Latin Iliad; and we have not wholly lost Tully's version of the poem of Aratus; but it does not appear that any man grew eminent by interpreting another, and perhaps it was more frequent to translate for exercise or amusement, than for fame.

The Arabs were the first nation who felt the ardour of translation: when they had subdued the eastern provinces of the Greek empire, they found their captives wiser than themselves, and made haste to relieve their wants by imparted knowledge. They discovered that many might grow wise by the labour of a few, and that improvements might be made with speed, when they had the knowledge of former ages in their own language. They therefore made haste to lay hold on medicine and philosophy, and turned their chief authors into Arabic. Whether they attempted the poets is not known; their literary zeal was vehement, but it was short, and probably expired before they had time to add the arts of elegance those of necessity.

The study of ancient literature was interrupted in Europe by the irruption of the northern nations, who subverted the Roman empire, and erected new kingdoms with new languages. It is not strange, that such confusion should suspend literary attention; those who lost, and those who gained dominion, had immediate difficulties to encounter, and immediate miseries to redress, and had little leisure, amidst the violence war, the trepidation of flight the distresses of forced migration, or the tumults of unsettled conquest, to inquire after speculative truth, to enjoy the amusement of imaginary adventures, to know the history of former ages, or study the events of any other lives. But no sooner had this chaos of dominion sunk into order, than learning began again to flourish in the calm of peace. When life and possessions were secure, convenience and enjoyment were soon sought, learning was found the highest gratification of the mind, and translation became one of the means by which it was imparted.

At last, by a concurrence of many causes, the European world was roused from its lethargy; those arts which had been long obscurely studied in the gloom of monasteries became the general favourites of mankind; every nation vied with its neighbour for the prize of learning; the epidemical emulation spread from south to north, and curiosity and translation found their way to Britain.

No. 69.] Saturday, Aug. 11, 1759.

He that reviews the progress of English literature, will find that translation was very early cultivated among us, but that some principles either wholly erroneous or too far extended, hindered our success from being always equal to our diligence.

Chaucer, who is generally considered as the father of our poetry, has left a version of Bœtius on the Comforts of Philosophy, the book which seems to have been the favourite of the middle ages, which had been translated into Saxon by King Alfred, and illustrated with a copious Comment ascribed to Aquinas. It may be supposed that Chaucer would apply more than common attention to an author of so much celebrity, yet he has attempted nothing higher than a version strictly literal, and has degraded the poetical parts to prose, that the constraint of versification might not obstruct his zeal for fidelity.

Caxton taught us typography about the year 1474. The first book printed in English was a translation. Caxton was both the translator and printer of the Destruction of Troye, a book which, in that infancy of learning, was considered as the best account of the fabulous ages, and which, though now driven out of notice by authors of no greater use or value, still continued to be read in Caxton's English to the beginning of the present century.

Caxton proceeded as he began, and except the poems of Gower and Chaucer, printed nothing but translations from the French, in which the original is so scupulously followed, that they afford us little knowledge of our own language; though the words are English, the phrase is foreign.

As learning advanced, new works were adopted into our language, but I think with little improvement of the art of translation, though foreign nations and other languages offered us models of a better method; till in the age of Elizabeth we began to find that greater liberty was necessary to elegance, and that elegance was necessary to general reception; some essays were then made upon the Italian poets, which deserve the praise and gratitude of posterity.

But the old practice was not suddenly forsaken; Holland filled the nation with literal translation; and what is yet more strange, the same exactness was obstinately practised in the versions of the poets. This absurd labour of construing into rhyme was countenanced by Jonson in his version of Horace; and whether it be that more men have learning than genius, or that the endeavours of that time were more directed towards knowledge than delight, the accuracy of Jonson found more imitators than the elegance of Fairfax; and May, Sandys, and Holiday, confined themselves to the toil of rendering line for line, not indeed with equal

felicity, for May and Sandys were poets, and Holiday only a scholar and a critic.

Feltham appears to consider it as the established law of poetical tranlation, that the lines should be neither more nor fewer than those of the original; and so long had this prejudice prevailed, that Denham praises Funshaw's version of Guarini as the example of a "new and noble way," as the first attempt to break the boundaries of custom, and assert the natural freedom of the Muse.

In the general emulation of wit and genius which the festivity of the Restoration produced, the poets shook of their constraint, and considered translation as no longer confined to servile closeness. But reformation is seldom the work of pure virtue, or unassisted reason. Translation was improved more by accident than conviction. The writers of the foregoing age had at least learning equal to their genius, and being often more able to explain the sentiments or illustrate the allusions of the ancients, than to exhibit their graces and transfuse their spirit, were perhaps willing sometimes to conceal their want of poetry by profusion of literature, and therefore translated literally, that their fidelity might shelter their insipidity or harshness. The wits of Charles' time had seldom more than slight and superficial views; and their care was, to hide their want of learning behind the colours of a gay imagination: they therefore translated always with freedom, sometimes with licentiousness, and perhaps expected that their readers should accept sprightliness for knowledge, and consider ignorance and mistake as impatience and negligence of a mind too rapid to stop at difficulties, and too elevated to descend to minuteness.

Thus was translation made more easy to the writer, and more delightful to the reader; and there is no wonder if ease and pleasure have found their advocates. The paraphrastic liberties have been almost universally admitted; and Sherbourn, whose learning was eminent, and who had no need of any excuse to pass slightly over obscurities, is the only writer who in later times has attempted to justify or revive the ancient severity.

There is undoubtedly a mean to be observed. Dryden saw very early that closeness best preserved an author's sense, and that freedom best exhibited his spirit; he therefore will deserve the highest praise, who can give a representation at once faithful and pleasing, who can convey the same thoughts with the same graces, and who, when he translates, changes nothing but the language.

No. 70.] Saturday, Aug. 18, 1759.

Few faults of style whether real or imaginary, excite the malignity of a more numerous class of readers than the use of hard words.

If an author be supposed to involve his thoughts in voluntary obscurity, and to obstruct, by unnecessary difficulties, a mind eager in pursuit of truth; if he writes not to make others learned, but to boast the learning which he possesses himself, and wishes to be admired rather than understood, he counteracts the first end of writing and justly suffers the utmost severity of censure, or the more afflictive severity of neglect.

But words are only hard to those who do not understand them; and the critic ought always to inquire, whether he is incommoded by the fault of the writer, or by his own.

Every author does not write for every reader; many questions are such as the illiterate part of mankind can have neither interest nor pleasure to discussing, and which therefore it would be a useless endeavour to level with common minds, by tiresome circumlocutions or laborious explanations; and many subjects of general use may be treated in a different manner, as the book is intended for the learned or the ignorant. Diffusion and explication are necessary to the instruction of those who, being neither able nor accustomed to think for themselves, can learn only what is expressly taught; but they who can form parallels, discover consequences, and multiply conclusions, are best pleased with involution of argument and compression of thought; they desire only to receive the seeds of knowledge which they may branch out by their own power to have the way to truth pointed out, which they can follow without a guide.

The Guardian directs one of his pupils "to think with the wise, but speak with the vulgar." This is a precept specious enough, but not always practicable. Difference of thoughts will produce difference of language. He that thinks with more extent than another will want words of larger meaning; he that thinks with more subtility will seek for terms of more nice discrimination; and where is the wonder, since words are but the images of things, that he who never knew the original should not know the copies?

Yet vanity inclines us to find faults any where rather than in ourselves. He that reads and grows no wiser seldom suspects his own deficiency; but complains of hard words and obscure sentences, and asks why books are written which cannot be understood?

Among the hards words which are no longer to be used, it has been long the custom to number terms of art. "Every man," says Swift, "is more able to explain the subject of an art than it professors; a farmer will tell you in two words, that he has broken his leg; but a surgeon, after a long discourse, shall leave you as ignorant as you were before." This could only have been said by such an exact observer of life, in gratification of malignity, or in ostentation of acuteness. Every hour produces instances of the necessity of terms of art. Mankind could never conspire in uniform affectation; it is not but by necessity that every science and every trade has its peculiar language. They that content themselves with general ideas may rest in general terms; but those whose studies or employments force them upon closer inspection, must have names for particular parts, and words by which they may express various modes of combination,

such as none but themselves have occasion to consider.

Artists are indeed sometimes ready to suppose that none can be strangers to words to which themselves are familiar, talk to an incidental inquirer as they talk to one another, and make their knowledge ridiculous by injudicious obtrusion. An art cannot be taught but by its proper terms, but it is not always necessary to teach the art.

That the vulgar express their thoughts clearly is far from true; and what perspicuity can be found among them proceeds not from the easiness of their language, but the shallowness of their thoughts. He that sees a building as a common spectator, contents himself with relating that it is great or little, mean or splendid, lofty or low; all these words are intelligible and common, but they convey no distinct or limited ideas; if he attempts, without the terms of architecture, to delinate the parts, or enumerate the ornaments, his narration at once becomes unintelligible. The terms, indeed, generally displease, because they are understood by few; but they are little understood only because few that look upon an edifice, examine its parts, or analyse its columns into their members.

The state of every other art is the same; as it is cursorily surveyed or accurately examined, different forms of expression become proper. In morality it is one thing to discuss the niceties of the casuist, and another to direct the practice of common life. In agriculture, he that instructs the farmer to plough and sow, may convey his notions without the words which he would find necessary in explaining to philosophers the process of vegetation; and if he who has nothing to do but to be honest by the shortest way, will perplex his mind with subtile speculations; or if he, whose task is to reap and thresh, will not be contented without examining the evolution of the seed, and circulation of the sap, the writers whom either shall consult are very little to be blamed, though it should sometimes happen that they are read in vain.

No. 71.] Saturday, Aug. 25, 1759.

Dick Shifter was born in Cheapside, and having passed reputably through all the classes of St. Paul's school, has been for some years a student in the Temple. He is of opinion, that intense application dulls the faculties, and thinks it necessary to temper the severity of the law by books that engage the mind, but do not fatigue it. He has therefore made a copious collection of plays, poems, and romances, to which he has recourse when he fancies himself tired with statutes and reports; and he seldom inquires very nicely whether he is weary or idle.

Dick has received from his favourite authors very strong impressions of a country life; and though his furthest excursions have been to Greenwich on one side, and Chelsea on the other, he has talked for several years with great pomp of language and elevation of sentiments, about a state too high for contempt and too low for envy, about homely quiet, and blameless simplicity, pastoral delights, and rural innocence.

His friends who had estates in the country, often invited him to pass the summer among them, but something or other had always hindered him; and he considered that to reside in the house of another man was to incur a kind of dependence inconsistent with that laxity of life which he had imagined as the chief good.

This summer he resolved to be happy, and procured a lodging to be taken for him at a solitary house, situated about thirty miles from London on the banks of a small river, with corn-fields before it and a hill on each side covered with wood. He concealed the place of his retirement, that none might violate his obscurity, and promised himself many a happy day when he should hide himself among the trees, and contemplate the tumults and vexations of the town.

He stepped into the post-chaise with his heart beating and his eyes sparkling, was conveyed through many varieties of delightful prospects, saw hills and meadows, cornfields and pasture, succeed each other, and for four hours charged none of his poets with fiction or exaggeration. He was now within six miles of happiness, when, having never felt so much agitation before, he began to wish his journey at an end, and the last hour was passed in changing his posture and quarrelling with his driver.

An hour may be tedious but cannot be long. He at length alighted at his new dwelling, and was received as he expected; he looked round upon the hills and rivulets, but his joints were stiff and his muscles sore, and his first request was to see his bed-chamber.

He rested well, and ascribed the soundness of his sleep to the stillness of the country. He expected from that time nothing but nights of quiet and days of rapture, and, as soon as he had risen wrote an account of his new state to one of his friends in the Temple.

"Dear Frank.

"I never pitied thee before. I am now as I could wish every man of wisdom and virtue to be, in the regions of calm content and placid meditation; with all the beauties of nature soliciting my notice, and all the diversities of pleasure courting my acceptance; the birds are chirping in the hedges, and the flowers blooming in the mead; the breeze is whistling in the wood, and the sun dancing on the water. I can now say with truth, that a man, capable of enjoying the purity of happiness, is never more busy than in his hours of leisure, nor ever less solitary than in a place of solitude.

"I am, dear Frank, &c."

When he had sent away his letter, he walked into the wood, with some inconvenience, from the furze that pricked his legs, and the briers that scratched his face. He at last sat down under a tree, and heard with great delight a shower, by which he was not wet, rattling

among the branches: this, said he, is the true image of obscurity; we hear of troubles and commotions, but never feel them.

His amusement did not overpower the calls of nature, and he therefore went back to order his dinner. He knew that the country produces whatever is eaten or drunk, and imagining that he was now at the source of luxury, resolved to indulge himself with dainties which he supposed might be procured at a price next to nothing, if any price at all was expected; and intended to amaze the rustics with his generosity, by paying more than they would ask. Of twenty dishes which he named, he was amazed to find that scarcely one was to be had; and heard, with astonishment and indignation, that all the fruits of the earth were sold at a higher price than in the streets of London.

His meal was short and sullen; and he retired again to his tree, to inquire how dearness could be consistant with abundance, or how fraud should be practised by simplicity. He was not satisfied with his own speculations, and returning home early in the evening, went a while from window to window, and found that he wanted something to do.

He inquired for a newspaper, and was told that farmers never minded news, but that they could send for it from the ale-house. A messenger was despatched, who ran away full speed, but loitered an hour behind the hedges, and at last coming back with his feet purposely bemired, instead of expressing the gratitude which Mr. Shifter expected for the bounty of a shilling, said that the night was wet, and the way dirty, and he hoped that his worship would not think it much to give him half-a-crown.

Dick now went to bed with some abatement of his expectations; but sleep, I know not how, revives our hopes, and rekindles our desires. He rose early in the morning, surveyed the landscape, and was pleased. He walked out, and passed from field to field, without observing any beaten path, and wondered that he had not seen the shepherdesses dancing, nor heard the swains piping to their flocks.

At last he saw some reapers and harvest-women at dinner. Here, said he, are the true Arcadians, and advanced courteously towards them, as afraid of confusing them by the dignity of his presence. They acknowledged his superiority by no other token than that of asking him for something to drink. He imagined that he had now purchased the privilege of discourse, and began to descend to familiar questions, endeavouring to accommodate his discourse to the grossness of rustic understandings. The clowns soon found that he did not know wheat from rye, and began to despise him; one of the boys, by pretending to show him a bird's nest, decoyed him into a ditch; and one of the wenches sold him a bargain.

This walk had given him no great pleasure; but he hoped to find other rustics less coarse of manners, and less mischievous of disposition. Next morning he was accosted by an attorney, who told him, that, unless he made farmer Dobson satisfaction for trampling his grass, he had orders to indict him. Shifter was offended but not terrified; and, telling the attorney that he was himself a lawyer, talked so volubly of pettifoggers and barraters, that he drove him away.

Finding his walks thus interrupted, he was inclined to ride, and being pleased with the appearance of a horse that was grazing in a neighbouring meadow, inquired the owner, who warranted him sound, and would not sell him, but that he was too fine for a plain man, Dick paid down the price, and, riding out to enjoy the evening, fell with his new horse into a ditch; they got out with difficulty, and as he was going to mount again, a countryman looked at the horse, and perceived him to be blind. Dick went to the seller, and demanded back his money; but was told that a man who rented his ground must do the best for himself, that his landlord had his rent though the year was barren, and that, whether horses had eyes or no, he should sell them to the highest bidder.

Shifter now began to be tired with rustic simplicity, and on the fifth day took possession again of his chambers, and bade farewell to the regions of calm content and placid meditation.

No. 72.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 1, 1759.

MEN complain of nothing more frequently than of deficient memory; and, indeed, every one finds that many of the ideas which he desired to retain have slipped irretrievably away; that the acquisitions of the mind are sometimes equally fugitive with the gifts of fortune; and that a short intermission of attention more certainly lessens knowledge than impairs an estate.

To assist this weakness of our nature, many methods have been proposed, all of which may be justly suspected of being ineffectual; for no art of memory, however its effect have been boasted or admired, has been ever adopted into general use, nor have those who possessed it appeared to excel others in readiness of recollection or multiplicity of attainments.

There is another art of which all have felt the want, though Themistocles only confessed it. We suffer equal pain from the pertinacious adhesion of unwelcome images, as from the evanescence of those which are pleasing and useful; and it may be doubted whether we should be more benefited by the art of memory or the art of forgetfulness.

Forgetfulness is necessary to remembrance. Ideas are retained by renovation of that impression which time is always wearing away, and which new images are striving to oblite rate. If useless thoughts could be expelled from the mind, all the valuable parts of our knowledge would more frequently recur, and every recurrence would reinstate them in their former place.

It is impossible to consider without some

regret how much might have been learned, or how much might have been invented by a rational and vigorous application of time, uselessly or painfully passed in the revocation of events which have left neither good nor evil behind them, in grief for misfortunes either repaired or irreparable, in resentment of injuries known only to ourselves, of which death has put the authors beyond our power.

Philosophy has accumulated precept upon precept, to warn us against the anticipation of future calamities. All useless misery is certainly folly, and he that feels evils before they come may be deservedly censured; yet surely to dread the future is more reasonable than to lament the past. The business of life is to go forwards: he who sees evil in prospect meets it in his way; but he who catches it by retrospection turns back to find it. That which is feared may sometimes be avoided, but that which is regretted to-day, may be regretted again to-morrow.

Regret is indeed useful and virtuous, and not only allowable but necessary, when it tends to the amendment of life, or to admonition of error which we may be again in danger of committing. But a very small part of the moments spent in meditation on the past, produce any reasonable caution or salutary sorrow. Most of the mortification that we have suffered, arose from the concurrence of local and temporary circumstances, which can never meet again; and most of our disappointments have succeeded those expectations, which life allows not be formed a second time.

It would add much to human happiness, if an art could be taught of forgetting all of which the remembrance is at once useless and afflictive, if that pain which never can end in pleasure could be driven totally away, that the mind might perform its functions without incumbrance, and the past might no longer encroach upon the present.

Little can be done well to which the whole mind is not applied; the business of every day calls for the day to which it is assigned; and he will have no leisure to regret yesterday's vexations who resolves not to have a new subject of regret to-morrow.

But to forget or to remember at pleasure, are equally beyond the power of man. Yet as memory may be assisted by method, and the decays of knowledge repaired by stated times of recollection, so the power of forgetting is capable of improvement. Reason will, by a resolute contest, prevail over imagination, and the power may be obtained of transferring the attention as judgment shall direct.

The incursions of troublesome thoughts are often violent and importunate; and it is not easy to a mind accustomed to their inroads to expel them immediately by putting better images into motion; but this enemy of quiet is above all others weakened by every defeat; the reflection which has been once overpowered and ejected, seldom returns with any formidable vehemence.

Employment is the great instrument of intellectual dominion. The mind cannot retire from its enemy into total vacancy, or turn aside from one object but by passing to another. The gloomy and the resentful are always found among those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing. We must be busy about good or evil, and he to whom the present offers nothing will often be looking backward on the past.

No. 73.] Saturday, Sept. 8, 1759.

That every man would be rich if a wish could obtain riches, is a position which I believe few will contest, at least in a nation like ours, in which commerce has kindled a universal emulation of wealth, and in which money receives all the honours which are the proper right of knowledge and of virtue.

Yet though we are all labouring for gold, as for the chief good, and, by the natural effort of unwearied diligence, have found many expeditious methods of obtaining it, we have not been able to improve the art of using it, or to make it produce more happiness than it afforded in former times, when every declaimer expatiated on its mischiefs, and every philosopher taught his followers to despise it.

Many of the dangers imputed of old to exorbitant wealth are now at an end. The rich are neither way-laid by robbers nor watched by informers; there is nothing to be dreaded from proscriptions, or seizures. The necessity of concealing treasure has long ceased; no man now needs counterfeit mediocrity, and condemn his plate and jewels to caverns and darkness, or feast his mind with the consciousness of clouded splendour, of finery which is useless till it is shown, and which he dares not show.

In our time the poor are strongly tempted to assume the appearance of wealth, but the wealthy very rarely desire to be thought poor; for we are at full liberty to display riches by every mode of ostentation. We fill our houses with useless ornaments, only to show that we can buy them; we cover our coaches with gold, and employ artists in the discovery of new fashions of expense; and yet it cannot be found that riches produce happiness.

Of riches, as of every thing else, the hope is more than the enjoyment; while we consider them as the means to be used, at some future time, for the attainment of felicity, we press on our pursuit ardently and vigorously, and that ardour secures us from weariness of ourselves; but no sooner do we sit down to enjoy our acquisitions, than we find than in sufficient to fill up the vacuities of life.

One cause which is not always observed of the insufficiency of riches is, that they very seldom make their owner rich. To be rich is to have more than is desired, and more than is wanted; to have something which may be spent without reluctance, and scattered without care, with which the sudden demands of desire may be gratified, the casual freaks of fancy indulged, or the unexpected opportunities of benevolence improved.

Avarice is always poor, but poor by her own fault. There is another poverty to which the

rich are exposed with less guilt by the officiousness of others. Every man, eminent for exuberance of fortune, is surrounded from morning to evening, and from evening to midnight, by flatterers, whose art of adulation consists in exciting artificial wants, and in forming new schemes of profusion.

Tom Tranquil, when he came to age, found himself in possession of a fortune of which the twentieth part might, perhaps, have made him rich. His temper is easy, and his affections soft; he receives every man with kindness, and hears him with credulity. His friends took care to settle him by giving him a wife, whom, having no particular inclination, he rather accepted than chose, because he was told that she was proper for him.

He was now to live with dignity proportionate to his fortune. What his fortune requires or admits Tom does not know, for he has little skill in computation, and none of his friends think it their interest to improve it. If he was suffered to live by his own choice, he would leave every thing as he finds it, and pass through the world distinguished only by inoffensive gentleness. But the ministers of luxury have marked him out as one at whose expense they may exercise their arts. A companion, who had just learned the names of the Italian masters, runs from sale to sale, and buys pictures, for which Mr. Tranquil pays, without inquiring where they shall be hung. Another fills his garden with statues, which Tranquil wishes away but dares not remove. One of his friends is learning architecture, by building him a house, which he passed by and inquired to whom it belonged; another has been for three years digging canals, and raising mounts; cutting trees down in one place, and planting them in another, on which Tranquil looks a with serene indifference, without asking what will be the cost. Another projector tells him that a waterwork, like that of Versailles, will complete the beauties of his seat, and lays his draughts before him; Tranquil turns his eyes upon them, and the artist begins his explanations; Tranquil raises no objections but orders him to begin the work, that he may escape from talk which he does not understand.

Thus a thousand hands are busy at his expense without adding to his pleasures. He pays and receives visits, and has loitered in public or in solitude, talking in summer of the town, and in winter of the country, without knowing that his fortune is impaired, till his steward told him this morning that he could pay the workmen no longer but by mortgaging a manor.

No. 74.] Saturday, Sept. 15, 1759.

In the mythological pedigree of learning, memory is made the mother of the muses, by which the masters of ancient wisdom, perhaps, meant to show the necessity of storing the mind copiously with true notions, before the imagination should be suffered to form fictions or collect embellishments; for the works of an ignorant poet can afford nothing higher than pleasing sound, and fiction is of no other use than to display the treasures of memory.

The necessity of memory to the acquisition of knowledge is inevitably felt and universally allowed, so that scarcely any other of the mental faculties are commonly considered as necessary to a student: he that admires the proficiency of another, always attributes it to the happiness of this memory; and he that laments his own defects, concludes with a wish that his memory was better.

It is evident that when the power of retention is weak, all the attempts at eminence of knowledge must be vain; and as few are willing to be doomed to perpetual ignorance, I may, perhaps, afford consolation to some that have fallen too easily into despondence, by observing that such weakness, is in my opinion, very rare, and that few have reason to complain of nature as unkindly sparing of the gifts of memory.

In the common business of life, we find the memory of one like that of another, and honestly impute omissions not to involuntary forgetfulness, but culpable inattention; but in literary inquiries, failure is imputed rather to want of memory than of diligence.

We consider ourselves as defective in memory, either because we remember less than we desire, or less than we suppose others to remember.

Memory is like all other human powers, with which no man can be satisfied who measures them by what he can conceive, or by what he can desire. He whose mind is most capacious, finds it much too narrow for his wishes; he that remembers most, remembers little compared with what he forgets. He, therefore, that, after the perusal of a book, finds few ideas remaining in his mind, is not to consider the disappointment as peculiar to himself, or to resign all hopes of improvement, because he does not retain what even the author has, perhaps, forgotten.

He who compares his memory with that of others, is often too hasty to lament the inequality. Nature has sometimes, indeed, afforded examples of enormous, wonderful, and gigantic memory. Scaliger reports of himself, that, in his youth, he could repeat above a hundred verses having once read them; and Barthius declares that he wrote his "Comment upon Cladian" without consulting the text. But not to have such degrees of memory is no more to be lamented than not to have the strength of Hercules, or the swiftness of Achilles. He that, in the distribution of good, has an equal share with common men, may justly be contented. Where there is no striking disparity, it is difficult to know of two which remembers most, and still more difficult to discover which reads with greater attention, which has renewed the first impression by more frequent repetitions, or by what accidental combination of ideas either mind might have united any particular narrative or argument to its former stock.

But memory, however impartially distributed so often deceives our trust, that almost

every man attempts, by some artifice or other, to secure its fidelity.

It is the practice of many readers to note, in the margin of their books, the most important passages, the strongest arguments, or the brightest sentiments. Thus they load their minds with superfluous attention, repress the vehemence of curiosity by useless deliberation, and by frequent interruption break the current of narration or the chain of reasoning, and at last close the volume, and forget the passages and marks together.

Others I have found unalterably persuaded that nothing is certainly remembered but what is transcribed; and they have, therefore, passed weeks and months in transferring large quotations to a common-place book. Yet why any part of a book, which can be consulted at pleasure, should be copied, I was never able to discover. The hand has no closer correspondence with the memory than the eye. The act of writing itself distracts the thoughts, and what is read twice, is commonly better remembered than what is transcribed. The method, therefore, consumes time without assisting memory.

The true art of memory is the art of attention. No man will read with much advantage who is not able, at pleasure, to evacuate his mind, or who brings not to his author, an intellect defecated and pure, neither turbid with care, nor agitated by pleasure. If the repositories of thought are already full, what can they receive; if the mind is employed on the past or future, the book will be held before the eyes in vain. What is read with delight is commonly retained, because pleasure always secures attention; but the books which are consulted by occasional necessity, and perused with impatience, seldom leave any traces on the mind.

No. 75.] Saturday, Sept. 22, 1759.

In the time when Bassora was considered as the school of Asia, and flourished by the reputation of its professors, and the confluence of its students, among the pupils that listened round the chair of Albamazar was Gelaleddin, a native of Tauris, in Persia, a young man, amiable in his manners and beautiful in his form, of boundless curiosity, incessant diligence, and irresistible genius, of quick apprehension, and tenacious memory, accurate without narrowness, and eager for novelty without inconstancy.

No sooner did Gelaleddin appear at Bassora, than his virtues and abilities raised him to distinction. He passed from class to class rather admired than envied by those whom the rapidity of his progress left behind: he was consulted by his fellow-students as an oraculous guide, and admitted as a competent auditor to the conferences of the sages.

After a few years, having passed through all the exercises of probation, Gelaleddin was invited to a professor's seat, and intreated to increase the splendour of Bassora. Gelaleddin affected to deliberate on the proposal, with which, before he considered it, he resolved to comply; and next morning retired to a garden planted for the recreation of the students, and entering a solitary walk began to meditate upon his future life.

"If I am thus eminent," said he, "in the regions of literature, I shall be yet more conspicuous in any other place; if I should now devote myself to study and retirement, I must pass my life in silence, unacquainted with the delights of wealth, the influence of power, the pomp of greatness and the charms of elegance, with all that man envies and desires, with all that keeps the world in motion, by the hope of gaining or the fear of losing it. I will therefore, depart to Tauris, where the Persian monarch resides in all the splendour of absolute dominion: my reputation will fly before me, my arrival will be congratulated by my kinsmen and friends; I shall see the eyes of those who predicted my greatness, sparkling with exultation, and the faces of those that once despised me clouded with envy, or counterfeiting kindness by artificial smiles. I will show my wisdom by my discourse, and my moderation by my silence; I will instruct the modest with easy gentleness, and repress the ostentatious by seasonable superciliousness. My apartments will be crowded by the inquisitive, and the vain, by those that honour and those that rival me; my name will soon reach the court; I shall stand before the throne of the emperor; the judges of the law will confess my wisdom, and the nobles will contend to heap gifts upon me. If I shall find that my merit, like that of others, excites malignity, or feel myself tottering on the seat of elevation, I may at last retire to academical obscurity, and become, in my lowest state, a professor of Bassora."

Having thus settled his determination, he declared to his friends his design of visiting Tauris, and saw with more pleasure than he ventured to express, the regret with which he was dismissed. He could not bear to delay the honours to which he was designed, and therefore hastened away, and in a short time entered the capital of Persia. He was immediately immersed in the crowd, and passed unobserved to his father's house. He entered, and was received, though not unkindly, yet without any excess of fondness, or exclamations of rapture. His father had, in his absence, suffered many losses, and Gelaleddin was considered as an additional burden to a falling family.

When he recovered from his surprise, he began to display his acquisitions and practised all the arts of narration and disposition: but the poor have no leisure to be pleased with eloquence; they heard his arguments without reflection, and his pleasantries without a smile. He then applied himself singly to his brothers and sisters, but found them all chained down by invariable attention to their own fortunes, and insensible of any other excellence than that which could bring some remedy for indigence.

It was now known in the neighbourhood that Gelaleddin was returned, and he sat for some

days in expectation that the learned would visit him for consultation, or the great for entertainment. But who would be pleased or instructed in the mansions of poverty? He then frequented places of public resort, and endeavoured to attract notice by the copiousness of his talk. The sprightly were silenced and went away to censure in some other place, his arrogance and his pedantry; and the dull listened quietly for a while, and then wondered why any man should take pains to obtain so much knowledge which would never do him good.

He next solicited the viziers for employment, not doubting but his service would be eagerly accepted. He was told by one that there was no vacancy in his office; by another, that his merit was above any patronage but that of the emperor; by a third that he would not forget him; and by the chief vizier, that he did not think literature of any great use in public business. He was sometimes admitted to their tables, where he exerted his wit and diffused his knowledge; but he observed, that where, by endeavour or accident, he had remarkably excelled, he was seldom invited a second time.

He now returned to Bassora, wearied and disgusted, but confident of resuming his former rank, and revelling again in satiety of praise. But he who had been neglected at Tauris, was not much regarded at Bassora; he was considered as a fugitive, who returned only because he could live in no other place; his companions found that they had formerly over-rated his abilities, and he lived long without notice or esteem.

No. 76.] Saturday, Sept. 29, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I was much pleased with your ridicule of those shallow critics, whose judgment, though often right as far as it goes, yet reaches only to inferior beauties, and who unable to comprehend the whole, judge only by parts, and from thence determine the merit of extensive works. But there is another kind of critic still worse, who judges by narrow rules, and those too often false, and which, though they should be true, and founded on nature, will lead but a very little way toward the just estimation of the sublime beauties in works of genius; for whatever part of an art can be executed or criticised by rules, that part is no longer the work of genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules. For my own part I profess myself an *Idler*, and love to give my judgment, such as it is, from my immediate perceptions without much fatigue of thinking: and I am of opinion, that if a man has not those perceptions right, it will be in vain for him to endeavour to supply their place by rules, which may enable him to talk more learnedly but not to distinguish more acutely. Another reason which has lessened my affection for the study of criticism is, that critics, so far as I have observed, debar themselves from receiving any pleasure from the polite arts, at the same time that they profess to love and admire them: for these rules being always uppermost, give them such a propensity to criticise, that instead of giving up the reins of their imagination into their author's hands, their frigid minds are employed in examining whether the performance be according to the rules of art.

To those who are resolved to be critics in spite of nature and at the same time have no great disposition to much reading and study, I would recommend to them to assume the character of connoisseur, which may be purchased at a much cheaper rate than that of a critic in poetry. The remembrance of a few names of painters, with their general characters, with a few rules of the academy, which they may pick up among the painters, will go a great way towards making a very notable connoisseur.

With a gentleman of this cast, I visited last week the Cartoons at Hampton-court; he was just returned from Italy, a connoisseur of course, and of course his mouth full of nothing, but the grace of Raffaelle, the purity of Dominichino, the learning of Poussin, and the air of Guido, the greatness of taste of the Carrachis, and the sublimity and grand contorno of Michael Angelo; with all the rest of the cant of criticism, which he emitted with that volubility which generally those orators have who annex no ideas to their words.

As we were passing through the rooms, in our way to the gallery, I made him observe a whole length of Charles the First, by Vandyke, as a perfect representation of the character as well as the figure of the man. He agreed it was very fine, but it wanted spirit and contrast, and had not the flowing line, without which a figure could not possibly be graceful. When we entered the gallery, I thought I could perceive him recollecting his rules by which he was to criticise Raffaelle. I shall pass over his observation of the boots being too little, and other criticisms of that kind, till we arrived at St. Paul preaching. "This," says he, "is esteemed the most excellent of all the cartoons; what nobleness, what dignity there is in that figure of St. Paul! and yet what an addition to that nobleness could Raffaelle have given, had the art of contrast been known in his time! but, above all, the flowing line, which constitutes grace and beauty! You would not have then seen an upright figure standing equally on both legs, and both hands stretched forward in the same direction, and his drapery, to all appearance, without the least art of disposition." The following picture is the Charge to Peter. "Here," says he, "are twelve upright figures; what a pity it is that Raffaelle was not acquainted with the pyramidal principle! He would then have contrived the figures in the middle to have been on higher ground, or the figures at the extremities stooping or lying, which would not only have formed the group into the shape of a pyramid, but likewise contrasted the standing figures. Indeed," added

he, "I have often lamented that so great a genius as Raffaelle had not lived in this enlightened age, since the art has been reduced to principles, and had had his education in one of the modern academies; what glorious works might we then have expected from his divine pencil!"

I shall trouble you no longer with my friend's observation, which, I suppose, you are now able to continue by yourself. It is curious to observe, that, at the same time that great admiration is pretended for a name of fixed reputation, objections are raised against those very qualities by which that great name was acquired.

Those critics are continually lamenting that Raffaelle had not the colouring and harmony of Rubens, or the light and shadow of Rembrant, without considering how much the gay harmony of the former, and affectation of the latter, would take from the dignity of Raffaelle; and yet Rubens had great harmony, and Rembrant understood light and shadow; but what may be an excellence in a lower class of painting, becomes a blemish in a higher; as the quick, sprightly turn, which is the life and beauty of epigrammatic compositions, would but ill suit with the majesty of heroic poetry.

To conclude; I would not be thought to infer from any thing that has been said, that rules are absolutely unnecessary; but to censure scrupulosity, a servile attention to minute exactness, which is sometimes inconsistent with higher excellency, and is lost in the blaze of expanded genius.

I do not know whether you will think painting a general subject. By inserting this letter, perhaps, you will incur the censure a man would deserve, whose business being to entertain a whole room, should turn his back to the company, and talk to a particular person.

I am, Sir, &c.

No 77.] Saturday, Oct. 6, 1759.

Easy poetry is universally admired; but I know not whether any rule has yet been fixed, by which it may be decided when poetry can be properly called easy. Horace has told us, that it is such as "every reader hopes to equal, but after long labour finds unattainable." This is a very loose description, in which only the effect is noted; the qualities which produce this effect remain to be investigated.

Easy poetry is that in which natural thoughts are expressed without violence to the language. The discriminating character of ease consists principally in the diction; for all true poetry requires that the sentiments be natural. Language suffers violence by harsh or by daring figures, by transposition, by unusual acceptations of words, and by any license which would be avoided by a writer of prose. Where any artifice appears in the construction of the verse, that verse is no longer easy. Any epithet which can be ejected without diminution of the sense, any curious iteration of the same word, and all unusual, though not ungrammatical structure of speech, destroy the grace of easy poetry.

The first lines of Pope's Iliad afford examples of many licenses which an easy writer must decline:—

> Achilles' wrath to Greece the direful spring
> Of woes unnumber'd heavenly goddess sing,
> The wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
> The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain.

In the first couplet the language is distorted by inversions, clogged with superfluities, and clouded by a harsh metaphor; and in the second there are two words used in an uncommon sense, two epithets inserted only to lengthen the line; all these practises may in a long work easily be pardoned, but they always produce some degree of obscurity and ruggedness.

Easy poetry has been so long excluded by ambition of ornament, and luxuriance of imagery, that its nature seems now to be forgotten. Affectation, however opposite to ease, is sometimes mistaken for it: and those who aspire to gentle elegance, collect female phrases and fashionable barbarisms, and imagine that style to be easy which custom has made familiar. Such was the idea of the poet who wrote the following verses to a countess cutting paper:—

> Pallas grew vap'rish once and odd,
> She would not do the least right thing
> Either for goddess or for god,
> Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor sing
>
> Jove frowned, and "Use," he cried, "those eyes
> So skilful, and those hands so taper;
> Do something exquisite and wise."—
> She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut paper
>
> This vexing him who gave her birth,
> Thought by all heaven a burning shame,
> What does she next, but bids of earth
> Her Burlington do just the same;
>
> Pallas, you give yourself strange airs,
> But sure you'll find it hard to spoil
> The sense and taste of one that bears
> The name of Saville and of Boyle
>
> Alas! one bad example shown,
> How quickly all the sex pursue!
> See, Madam! see the arts o'erthrown
> Between John Overton and you.

It is the prerogative of easy poetry to be understood as long as the language lasts; but modes of speech, which owe their prevalence only to modish folly, or to the eminence of those that use them, die away with their inventors, and their meaning, in a few years, is no longer known.

Easy poetry is commonly sought in petty compositions upon minute subjects; but ease, though it excludes pomp, will admit greatness. Many lines in Cato's soliloquy are at once easy and sublime:—

> The divinity that stirs within us;
> 'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
> And intimates eternity to man.
> ———If there is a power above us,
> And that there is all nature cries aloud
> Thro' all her works, he must delight in virtue,
> And that which he delights in must be happy.

Nor is ease more contrary to wit than to sublimity: the celebrated stanza of Cowley, on a

lady elaborately dressed, loses nothing of its freedom by the spirit of the sentiment :—

> Th' adorning thee with so much art
> Is but a barbarous skill,
> 'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart,
> Too apt before to kill.

Cowley seems to have possessed the power of writing easily beyond any other of our poets; yet his pursuit of remote thoughts led him often into harshness of expression. Waller often attempted, but seldom attained it; for he is too frequently driven into transpositions. The poets, from the time of Dryden, have gradually advanced in embellishment, and consequently departed from simplicity and ease.

To require from any author many pieces of easy poetry, would be, indeed, to oppress him with too hard a task. It is less difficult to write a volume of lines swelled with epithets, brightened by figures, and stiffened by transpositions, than to produce a few couplets graced only by naked elegance and simple purity, which requires so much care and skill, that I doubt whether any of our authors have yet been able, for twenty lines together, nicely to observe the true definition of easy poetry.

No. 78.] Saturday, Oct. 13, 1759.

I have passed the summer in one of those places to which a mineral spring gives the idle and luxurious an annual reason for resorting, whenever they fancy themselves offended by the heat of London. What is the true motive of this periodical assembly I have never yet been able to discover. The greater part of the visitants neither feel diseases nor fear them. What pleasure can be expected, more than the variety of the journey, I know not, for the numbers are too great for privacy, and too small for diversion. As each is known to be a spy upon the rest, they all live in continual restraint; and having but a narrow range for censure, they gratify its cravings by preying on one another.

But every condition has some advantages. In this confinement a smaller circle affords opportunities for more exact observation. The glass that magnifies its object contracts the sight to a point; and the mind must be fixed upon a single character to remark its minute peculiarities. The quality or habit which passes unobserved in the tumult of successive multitudes, becomes conspicuous when it is offered to the notice day after day; and perhaps I have, without any distinct notice, seen thousands, like my late companions; for when the scene can be varied at pleasure, a slight disgust turns us aside before a deep impression can be made upon the mind.

There was a select set, supposed to be distinguished by superiority of intellects, who always passed the evening together. To be admitted to their conversation was the highest honour of the place; many youths aspired to distinction, by pretending to occasional invitations; and the ladies were often wishing to be men, that they might partake the pleasures of learned society.

I know not whether by merit or destiny, I was soon after my arrival, admitted to this envied party, which I frequented till I had learned the art by which each endeavoured to support his character.

Tom Steady was a vehement asserter of uncontroverted truth; and by keeping himself out of the reach of contradiction had acquired all the confidence which the consciousness of irresistible abilities could have given. I was once mentioning a man of eminence, and after having recounted his virtues, endeavoured to represent him fully, by mentioning his faults. "Sir," said Mr. Steady, "that he has faults I can easily believe, for who is without them? No man, Sir, is now alive, among the innumerable multitudes that swarm upon the earth, however wise, or however good, who has not, in some degree, his failings and his faults. If there be any man faultless, bring him forth into public view, show him openly, and let him be known; but I will venture to affirm, and, till the contrary be plainly shown, shall always maintain, that no such man is to be found. Tell not me, Sir, of impeccability and perfection; such talk is for those that are strangers in the world; I have seen several nations, and conversed with all ranks of people; I have known the great and the mean, the learned and the ignorant, the old and the young, the clerical and the lay; but I have never found a man without a fault; and I suppose shall die in the opinion, that to be human is to be frail."

To all this nothing could be opposed. I listened with a hanging head: Mr. Steady looked round on the hearers with triumph, and saw every eye congratulating his victory; he departed, and spent the next morning in following those who retired from the company, and telling them, with injunctions of secrecy, how poor Sprightly began to take liberties with men wiser than himself, but that he suppressed him by a decisive argument, which put him totally to silence.

Dick Snug is a man of sly remark and pithy sententiousness; he never immerges himself in the stream of conversation, but lies to catch his companions in the eddy: he is often very successful in breaking narratives, and confounding eloquence. A gentleman, giving the history of one of his acquaintance, made mention of a lady that had many lovers: "Then," said Dick, "she was either handsome or rich." This observation being well received, Dick watched the progress of the tale; and hearing of a man lost in a shipwreck, remarked, that "no man was ever drowned upon dry land."

Will Startle is a man of exquisite sensibility, whose delicacy of frame, and quickness of discernment, subject him to impressions from the slightest causes; and who, therefore, passes his life between rapture and horror, in quiverings of delight, or convulsions of disgust. His emotions are too violent for many words; his thoughts are always discovered by exclamations. "Vile, odious, horrid, detestable," and "sweet, charming, delightful, astonishing," compose almost his whole vocabulary, which he utters with various contor-

tions and gesticulations, not easily related or described.

Jack Solid is a man of much reading, who utters nothing but quotations; but having been, I suppose, too confident of his memory, he has for some time neglected his books, and his stock grows every day more scanty. Mr. Solid has found an opportunity every night to repeat, from Hudibras.

> Doubtless the pleasure is as great
> Of being cheated, as to cheat;

and from Waller.

> Poets lose half the praise they would have got,
> Were it but known what they discretely blot.

Dick Misty is a man of deep research, and forcible penetration. Others are content with superficial appearances: but Dick holds, that there is no effect without a cause, and values himself upon his power of explaining the difficulty, and displaying the abstruse. Upon a dispute among us, which of two young strangers was more beautiful, "You," says Mr. Misty, turning to me, "like Amaranthia better than Chloris. I do not wonder at the preference, for the cause is evident; there is in man a perception of harmony, and a sensibility of perfection, which touches the finer fibres of the mental texture; and before reason can descend from her throne, to pass her sentence upon the things compared, drives us towards the object proportioned to our faculties, by an impulse gentle, yet irresistible; for the harmonic system of the universe, and the reciprocal magnetism of similar natures, are always operating towards conformity and union; nor can the powers of the soul cease from agitation, till they find something on which they can repose." To this nothing was opposed; and Amaranthia was acknowledged to excel Chloris.

Of the rest you may expect an account from,

Sir, yours,

ROBIN SPRITELY.

No. 79.] SATURDAY, OCT. 20, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

YOUR acceptance of a former letter on painting, gives me encouragement to offer a few more sketches on the same subject.

Amongst the painters and the writers on painting, there is one maxim universally admitted, and continually inculcated. Imitate nature is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be understood; the consequence of which is, that every one takes it in the most obvious sense, that objects are represented naturally when they have such relief that they seem real. It may appear strange, perhaps, to hear this sense of the rule disputed; but it must be considered, that, if the excellence of a painter consisted only in this kind of imitation, painting must lose its rank, and be no longer considered as a liberal art, and sister to poetry, this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the slowest intellect is always sure to succeed best; for the painter of genius cannot stoop to drudgery, in which the understanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with poetry, but by its powers over the imagination? To this power the painter of genius directs his aim; in this sense he studies nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural in the confined sense of the word.

The grand style of painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and must be kept as separate from it as the style of poetry from that of history. Poetical ornaments destroy that air of truth and plainness which ought to characterise history; but the very being of poetry consists in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm the imagination. To desire to see the excellencies of each style united, to mingle the Dutch with the Italian school, is to join contrarieties which cannot subsist together, and which destroy the efficacy of each other. The Italian attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature; the Dutch, on the contrary, to literal truth, and a minute exactness in the detail, as I may say of nature modified by accident. The attention to these petty peculiarities is is the very cause of this naturalness, so much admired in the Dutch pictures, which, if we suppose it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, which ought to give place to a beauty of a superior kind, since one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion was asked concerning the works of Michael Angelo, whether they would receive any advantage from possessing this mechanical merit, I should not scruple to say they would not only receive no advantage, but would lose, in a great measure, the effect which they now have on every mind susceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be said to be all genius and soul; and why should they be loaded with heavy matter, which can only counteract his purpose by retarding the progress of the imagination.

If this opinion should be thought one of the wild extravagancies of enthusiasm, I shall only say, that those who censure it are not conversant in the works of the great masters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthusiasm that the arts of painting and poetry may admit. There may perhaps be too great an indulgence, as well as too great a restraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monsters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeless insipidity. An intimate knowledge of the passions, and good sense, but not common sense, must at last determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reason, that Michael Angelo sometimes transgressed those limits, and I think I have seen figures of him of which it was very difficult to determine whether they were in the highest degree sublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be said to be the ebullitions of genius; but at least

he had this merit, that he never was insipid, and whatever passion his works may excite, they will always escape contempt.

What I have had under consideration is the sublimest style, particularly that of Michael Angelo, the Homer of painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalness, which of the lowest kind is the chief merit; but in painting, as in poetry, the highest style has the least of common nature.

One may very safely recommend a little more enthusiasm to the modern painters; too much is certainly not the vice of the present age. The Italians seem to have been continually declining in this respect from the time of Michael Angelo to that of Carlo Maratti, and from thence to the very bathos of insipidity to which they are now sunk; so that there is no need of remarking, that where I mentioned the Italian painters in opposition to the Dutch, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old Roman and Bolognian schools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an Italian painter, the Venetian school, which may be said to be the Dutch part of the Italian genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the painters, that however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themselves very much upon it; and to the connoisseurs, that when they see a cat or fiddle painted so finely, that as the phrase is, "It looks as if you could take it up," they would not for that reason immediately compare the painter to Raffaelle and Michael Angelo.

No. 80.] Saturday, Oct. 27, 1759.

That every day has its pains and sorrows is universally experienced, and almost universally confessed; but let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we shall find that every day has likewise its pleasures and its joys.

The time is now come when the town is again beginning to be full, and the rusticated beauty sees an end of her banishment. Those whom the tyranny of fashion had condemned to pass the summer among shades and brooks, are now preparing to return to plays, balls, and assemblies, with health restored by retirement, and spirits kindled by expectation.

Many a mind, which has languished some months without emotion or desire, now feels a sudden renovation of its faculties. It was long ago observed by Pythagoras, that ability and necessity dwell near each other. She that wandered in the garden without sense of its fragrance, and lay day after day stretched upon a couch behind a green curtain, unwilling to wake and unable to sleep, now summons her thoughts to consider which of her last year's clothes shall be seen again, and to anticipate the raptures of a new suit; the day and the night are now filled with occupation; the laces, which were too fine to be worn among rustics, are taken from the boxes, and reviewed, and the eye is no sooner closed after its labours, than whole shops of silk busy the fancy.

But happiness is nothing if it is not known, and very little if it is not envied. Before the day of departure a week is always appropriated to the payment and reception of ceremonial visits, at which nothing can be mentioned but the delights of London. The lady who is hastening to the scene of action, flutters her wings, displays her prospect of felicity, tells how she grudges every moment of delay, and, in the presence of those whom she knows condemned to stay at home, is sure to wonder by what arts life can be made supportable through a winter in the country, and to tell how often, amidst the ecstacies of an opera, she shall pity those friends whom she has left behind. Her hope of giving pain is seldom disappointed: the affected indifference of one, the faint congratulations of another, the wishes of some openly confessed, and the silent dejection of the rest, all exalt her opinion of her own superiority.

But, however we may labour for our own deception, truth, though unwelcome, will sometimes intrude upon the mind. They who have already enjoyed the crowds and noise of the great city, know that their desire to return is little more than the restlessness of a vacant mind, that they are not so much led by hope as driven by disgust, and wish rather to leave the country than to see the town. There is commonly in every coach a passenger enwrapped in silent expectation, whose joy is more sincere, and whose hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the last summer released from her governess, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, suspects no fallacy in the gay representation. She believes herself passing into another world, and images London as an Elysian region, where every hour has its proper pleasure, where nothing is seen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always rises on a show, and the evening closes on a ball; where the eyes are used only to sparkle, and the feet only to dance.

Her aunt and her mother amuse themselves on the road, with telling her of dangers to be dreaded, and cautions to be observed. She hears them as they heard their predecessors, with incredulity or contempt. She sees that they have ventured and escaped; and one of the pleasures which she promises herself is, to detect their falsehoods, and be freed from their admonitions.

We are inclined to believe those whom we do not know, because they have never deceived us. The fair adventurer may perhaps listen to the Idler, whom she cannot suspect of rivalry or malice; yet he scarcely expects to be credited when he tells her, that her expectations will likewise end in disappointment.

The uniform necessities of human nature produce in a great measure uniformity of life, and for part of the day make one place like another; to dress and undress, to eat and to sleep, are the same in London as in the coun-

try. The supernumerary hours have indeed a greater variety both of pleasure and of pain. The stranger gazed on by multitudes at her first appearance in the Park, is perhaps on the highest summit of female happiness: but how great is the anguish when the novelty of another face draws her worshippers away! The heart may leap for a time under a fine gown; but the sight of a gown yet finer puts an end to rapture. In the first row at an opera, two hours may be happily passed in listening to the music on the stage, and watching the glances of the company; but how will the night end in despondency when she that imagined herself the sovereign of the place, sees lords contending to lead Iris to her chair! There is little pleasure in conversation to her whose wit is regarded but in the second place; and who can dance with ease or spirit that sees Amaryllis led out before her? She that fancied nothing but a succession of pleasures, will find herself engaged without design in numberless competitions, and mortified without provocation with numberless afflictions.

But I do not mean to extinguish that ardour which I wish to moderate, or to discourage those whom I am endeavouring to restrain. To know the world is necessary, since we are born for the help of one another; and to know it early is convenient, if it be only that we may learn early to despise it. She that brings to London a mind well prepared for improvement, though she misses her hope of uninterrupted happiness, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

No. 81.] Saturday, Nov. 3, 1759.

As the English army was passing towards Quebec, along a soft savanna between a mountain and a lake, one of the petty chiefs of the inland regions stood upon a rock surrounded by his clan, and from behind the shelter of the bushes contemplated the art and regularity of European war. It was evening, the tents were pitched: he observed the security with which the troops rested in the night, and the order with which the march was renewed in the morning. He continued to pursue them with his eye till they could be seen no longer, and then stood for some time silent and pensive.

Then turning to his followers, "My children," said he, "I have often heard from men hoary with long life, that there was a time when our ancestors were absolute lords of the woods, the meadows, and the lakes, wherever the eye can reach, or the foot can pass. They fished and hunted, feasted and danced, and, when they were weary lay down under the first thicket, without danger, and without fear. They changed their habitations as the seasons required, convenience prompted, or curiosity allured them; and sometimes gathered the fruits of the mountain, and sometimes sported in canoes along the coast.

"Many years and ages are supposed to have been thus passed in plenty and security; when, at last, a new race of men entered our country from the great ocean. They inclosed themselves in habitations of stone, which our ancestors could neither enter by violence, nor destroy by fire. They issued from those fastnesses, sometimes, covered like the armadillo with shells, from which the lance rebounded on the striker, and sometimes carried by mighty beasts which had never been seen in our vales or forests, of such strength and swiftness, that flight and opposition were vain alike. Those invaders ranged over the continent, slaughtering in their rage those that resisted, and those that submitted, in their mirth. Of those that remained, some were buried in caverns, and condemned to dig metals for their masters; some were employed in tilling the ground, of which foreign tyrants devour the produce; and, when the sword and the mines have destroyed the natives, they supply their place by human beings of another colour, brought from some distant country to perish here under toil and torture.

"Some there are who boast their humanity, and content themselves to seize our chases and fisheries, who drive us from every track of ground where fertility and pleasantness invite them to settle, and make no war upon us, except when we intrude upon our own lands.

"Others pretend to have purchased a right of residence and tyranny; but surely the insolence of such bargains is more offensive than the avowed and open dominion of force. What reward can induce the possessor of a country to admit a stranger more powerful than himself? Fraud or terror must operate in such contracts; either they promised protection which they never have afforded, or instruction which they never imparted. We hoped to be secured by their favour from some other evil, or to learn the arts of Europe, by which we might be able to secure ourselves. Their power they never have exerted in our defence, and their arts they have studiously concealed from us. Their treaties are only to deceive, and their traffic only to defraud us. They have a written law among them, of which they boast as derived from Him who made the earth and sea, and by which they profess to believe that man will be made happy when life shall forsake him. Why is not this law communicated to us? It is concealed because it is violated. For how can they preach it to an Indian nation, when I am told that one of its first precepts forbids them to do to others what they would not that other should do to them?

"But the time perhaps is now approaching when the pride of usurpation shall be crushed, and the cruelties of invasion shall be revenged. The sons of rapacity have now drawn their swords upon each other, and referred their claims to the decision of war; let us look unconcerned upon the slaughter and remember that the death of every European delivers the country from a tyrant and a robber; for what is the claim of either nation, but the claim of the vulture to the leveret, of the tiger to the fawn? Let them then continue to dispute

their title to regions which they cannot people, to purchase by danger and blood the empty dignity of dominion over mountains which they will never climb, and rivers which they will never pass. Let us endeavour in the mean time, to learn their discipline, and to forge their weapons; and, when they shall be weakened with mutual slaughter, let us rush down upon them, force their remains to take shelter in their ships, and reign once more in our native country."

No. 82.] Saturday, Nov. 10, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

Discoursing in my last letter on the different practice of the Italian and Dutch painters, I observed, that "the Italian painter attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature."

I was led into the subject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cause of this conduct of the Italian masters. If it can be proved that by this choice they selected the most beautiful part of the creation, it will show how much their principles are founded on reason, and, at the same time, discover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I suppose it will be easily granted, that no man can judge whether any animal be beautiful in its kind, or deformed, who has seen only one of that species; that is as conclusive in regard to the human figure; so that if a man, born blind, was to recover his sight, and the most beautiful woman was brought before him, he could not determine whether she was handsome or not; nor, if the most beautiful and most deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he should give the preference, having seen only those two. To distinguish beauty, then, implies the having seen many individuals of that species. If it is asked, how is more skill acquired by the observation of greater numbers? I answer, that, in consequence of having seen many, the power is acquired, even without seeking after it, of distinguishing between accidental blemishes and excrescences which are continually varying the surface of Nature's works, and the invariable general form which nature most frequently produces, and always seems to intend in her productions.

Thus amongst the blades of grass or leaves of the same tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable: a naturalist, before he chose one as a sample, would examine many, since if he took the first that occurred, it might have by accident, or otherwise, such a form as that it would scarcely be known to belong to that species; he selects as the painter does, the most beautiful, that is, the most general form of nature.

Every species of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be said to have a fixed or determinate form towards which nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the centre; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point, and as they all cross the centre, though only one passes through any other point, so it will be found that perfect beauty is oftener produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To instance in a particular part of a feature: the line that forms the ridge of the nose is beautiful when it is straight; this then is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any other irregular form, that shall be proposed. As we are then more accustomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reason why we approve and admire it as we approve and admire customs, and fashions of dress for no other reason than that we are used to them, so that though habit and custom cannot be said to be the cause of beauty, it is certainly the cause of our liking it; and I have no doubt but that, if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea now annexed it, and take that of beauty: as, if the whole world should agree that *yes* and *no* should change their meanings, *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

Whoever undertakes to proceed farther in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty respecting different species, or to show why one species is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him first to prove that one species is more beautiful than another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reason, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgment. He who says a swan is more beautiful than a dove, means little more than he has more pleasure in seeing a swan than a dove, either from the stateliness of its motions, or its being a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from some association of ideas of innocence that he always annexes to the dove; but if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himself, and find at last that the great mother of nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules. Among the various reasons why we prefer one part of her works to another, the most general, I believe, is habit and custom; custom makes, in a certain sense, white black, and black white! it is custom alone determines our preference of the colour of the Europeans to the Æthiopians; and they, for the same reason, prefer their own colour to ours. I suppose nobody will doubt, if one of their painters were to paint the goddess of beauty, but that he would represent her black, with thick lips, flat nose, and woolly hair; and, it seems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not; for

by what criterion will any one dispute the propriety of his idea? We, indeed, say, that the form and colour of the European is preferable to that of the Æthiopian; but I know of no reason we have for it, but that we are more accustomed to it. It is absurd to say that beauty is possessed of attractive powers, which irresistibly seize the corresponding mind with love and admiration, since that argument is equally conclusive in the favour of the white and the black philosopher.

The black and white nations must, in respect of beauty, be considered as of different kinds, at least a different species of the same kind; from one of which to the other, as I observed, no inference can be drawn.

Novelty is said to be one of the causes of beauty: that novelty is a very sufficient reason why we should admire, is not denied; but because it is uncommon is it therefore beautiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the same form, on account of its colour, has nothing to do with this argument, which reaches only to form. I have here considered the word beauty as being properly applied to form alone. There is a necessity of fixing this confined sense; for there can be no argument if the sense of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A rose may as well be said to be beautiful because it has a fine smell, as a bird because of its colour. When we apply the word beauty, we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but something valuable on account of its rarity, usefulness, colour, or any other property. A horse is said to be a beautiful animal; but, had a horse as few good qualities as a tortoise, I do not imagine that he would be then esteemed beautiful.

A fitness to the end proposed, is said to be another cause of beauty; but supposing we were proper judges of what form is the most proper in an animal to constitute strength or swiftness, we always determine concerning its beauty, before we exert our understanding to judge of its fitness.

From what has been said, it may be inferred, that the works of nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful; and that preference is given from custom, or some association of ideas; and that, in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary; if it has been proved, that the painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty, he must, by regarding minute particularities and accidental discriminations, deviate from the universal rule, and pollute his canvass with deformity.

No. 83.] Saturday, Nov. 17, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I suppose you have forgotten that many weeks ago I promised to send you a account of my companions at the Wells. You would not deny me a place among the most faithful votaries of idleness, if you knew how often I have recollected my engagement, and contented myself to delay the performance for some reason which I durst not examine because I knew it to be false; how often I have sat down to write and rejoiced at interruption; and how often I have praised the dignity of resolution, determined at night to write in the morning, and deferred it in the morning to the quiet hours of night.

I have at last begun what I have long wished at an end, and find it more easy than I expected to continue my narration.

Our assembly could boast no such constellation of intellects as Clarendon's band of associates. We had among us no Selden, Falkland, or Waller; but we had men not less important in their own eyes, though less distinguished by the public; and many a time have we lamented the partiality of mankind, and agreed that men of the deepest inquiry sometimes let their discoveries die away in silence, that the most comprehensive observers have seldom opportunities of imparting their remarks, and that modest merit passes in the crowd unknown and unheeded.

One of the greatest men of the society was Sim Scruple, who lives in a continual equipoise of doubt, and is a constant enemy to confidence and dogmatism. Sim's favourite topic of conversation is, the narrowness of the human mind, the fallaciousness of our senses, the prevalence of early prejudice, and the uncertainty of appearances. Sim has many doubts about the nature of death, and is sometimes inclined to believe that sensation may survive motion, and that a dead man may feel though he cannot stir. He has sometimes hinted that man might perhaps have been naturally a quadruped; and thinks it would be very proper, that at the Foundling Hospital some children should be inclosed in an apartment in which the nurses should be obliged to walk half upon four and half upon two, that the younglings, being bred without the prejudice of example, might have no other guide than nature, and might at last come forth into the world as genius should direct, erect or prone, on two legs or on four.

The next in dignity of mien and fluency of talk was Dick Wormwood, whose sole delight is, to find every thing wrong. Dick never enters a room but he shows that the door and the chimney are ill-placed. He never walks into the fields but he finds ground ploughed which is fitter for pasture. He is always an enemy to the present fashion. He holds that all the beauty and virtue of women will soon be destroyed by the use of tea. He triumphs when he talks on the present system of education, and tells us with great vehemence, that we are learning words when we should learn things. He is of opinion that we suck in errors at the nurse's breast and thinks it extremely ridiculous that children should be taught to use the right hand rather than the left.

Bob Sturdy considers it as a point of honour to say again what he has once said, and wonders how any man that has been known to al-

ter his opinion, can look his neighbours in the face. Bob is the most formidable disputant of the whole company; for, without troubling himself to search for reasons, he tires his antagonist with repeated affirmations. When Bob has been attacked for an hour with all the powers of eloquence and reason, and his position appears to all but himself utterly untenable, he always closes the debate with his first declaration, introduced by a stout preface of contemptuous civility, "All this is very judicious; you may talk, Sir, as you please; but I will still say what I said at first." Bob deals much in universals, which he has now obliged us to the let pass without exceptions. He lives on an annuity, and holds that "there are as many thieves as traders;" he is of loyalty unshaken, and always maintains; that "he who sees a Jacobite sees a rascal."

Phil Gentle is an enemy to the rudeness of contradiction and the turbulance of debate. Phil has no notions of his own, and therefore willingly catches from the last speaker such as he shall drop. This inflexibility of ignorance is easily accommodated to any tenet; his only difficulty is, when the disputants grow zealous, how to be of two contrary opinions at once. If no appeal is made to his judgment, he has the art of distributing his attention and his smiles in such a manner, that each thinks him of his own party; but if he is obliged to speak, he then observes that the question is difficult; that he never received so much pleasure from a debate before; that neither of the contravertists could have found his match in any other company; that Mr. Wormwood's assertion is very well supported, and yet there is great force in what Mr. Scruple advanced against it. By this indefinite declaration both are commonly satisfied; for he that has prevailed is in good humour; and he that has felt his own weakness is very glad to have escaped so well.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

Robin Spritely.

No 84.] Saturday, Nov. 24, 1759.

Biography is, of the various kind of narrative writing, that which is most eagerly read, and most easily applied to the purposes of life.

In romances, when the wide field of possibility lies open to invention, the incidents may easily be made more numerous, the vicissitudes more sudden, and the events more wonderful; but from the time of life when fancy begins to be over-ruled by reason and corrected by experience, the most artful tale raises little curiosity when it is known to be false; though it may, perhaps, be sometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant style, not for the sake of knowing what is contains, but how it is written; or those that are weary of themselves, may have recourse to it as a pleasing dream, of which, when they awake, they voluntarily dismiss the images from their minds.

The examples and events of history, press, indeed, upon the mind with the weight of truth; but when they are reposited in the memory, they are oftener employed for show than use, and rather diversify conversation than regulate life. Few are engaged in such scenes as give them opportunities of growing wiser by the downfal of statesmen or the defeat of generals. The stratagems of war, and the intrigues of courts, are read by far the greater part of mankind with the same indifference as the adventures of fabled heroes, or the revolutions of a fairy region. Between falsehood and useless truth there is little difference. As gold which he cannot spend will make no man rich, so knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wise.

The mischievous consequences of vice and folly, of irregular desires and predominant passions, are best discovered by those relations which are levelled with the general surface of life, which tell not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he lost the favour of his prince, but how he became discontented with himself.

Those relations are therefore commonly of most value in which the writer tells his own story. He that recounts the life of another commonly dwells most upon conspicuous events, lessens the familiarity of his tale to increase its dignity, shows his favourite at a distance decorated and magnified like the ancient actors in their tragic dress, and endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero.

But if it be true, which was said by a French prince, "That no man was a hero to the servants of his chamber," it is equally true that every man is yet less a hero to himself. He that is most elevated above the crowd by the importance of his employments, or the reputation of his genius, feels himself affected by fame or business but as they influence his domestic life. The high and low, as they have the same faculties and the same senses, have no less similitudes in their pains and pleasures. The sensations are the same in all, though produced by very different occasions. The prince feels the same pain when an invader seizes a province, as the farmer when a thief drives away his cow. Men thus equal in themselves will appear equal in honest and impartial biography; and those whom fortune or nature place at the greatest distance, may afford instruction to each other.

The writer of his own life has at least the first qualification of an historian, the knowledge of the truth; and though it may be plausibly objected that his temptations to disguise it are equal to his opportunities of knowing it, yet I cannot but think that impartiality may be expected with equal confidence from him that relates the passages of his own life, as from him that delivers the transactions of another.

Certainty of knowledge not only excludes mistake, but fortifies veracity. What we collect by conjecture, and by conjecture only can one man judge of another's motives or sentiments, is easily modified by fancy or by desire; as objects imperfectly discerned take forms from the hope or fear of the beholder. But

that which is fully known cannot be falsified but with reluctance of understanding, and alarm of conscience: of understanding, the lover of truth; of conscience, the sentinel of virtue.

He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wishes either to exalt his praise or aggravate his infamy; many temptations to falsehood will occur in the disguise of passions, too specious to fear much resistance. Love of virtue will animate panegyric, and hatred of wickedness imbitter censure. The zeal of gratitude, the ardour of patriotism, fondness for an opinion, or fidelity to a party, may easily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well disposed, and prevail over unassisted and unfriended veracity.

But he that speaks of himself has no motive to falsehood or partiality except self-love, by which all have so often been betrayed, that all are on the watch against its artifices. He that writes an apology for a single action, to confute an accusation, to recommend himself to favour, is indeed always to be suspected of favouring his own cause; but he that sits down calm and voluntarily to review his life for the admonition of posterity, or to amuse himself, and leaves this account unpublished, may be commonly presumed to tell truth, since falsehood cannot appease his own mind, and fame will not be heard beneath the tomb.

No. 85.] Saturday, Dec. 1, 1759.

One of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happiness or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very easy to decide.

He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be reverenced as a master.

He that conveys knowledge by more pleasing ways, may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that supplies life with innocent amusement, will be certainly caressed as a pleasing companion.

But few of those who fill the world with books have any pretensions to the hope either of pleasing or instructing. They have often no other task than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to those which former authors have supplied.

That all compilations are useless I do not assert. Particles of science are often very widely scattered. Writers of extensive comprehension have incidental remarks upon topics very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which yet are not known because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under proper heads is very laudably employed, for though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and by making that easy of attainment which is already written, may give some mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

But the collections poured lately from the press have been seldom made at any great expense of time or inquiry, and therefore only serve to distract choice without supplying any real want.

It is observed that "a corrupt society has many laws:" I know not whether it is not equally true, that "an ignorant age has many books." When the treasures of ancient knowledg lie unexamined, and original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by setting before us what our own sloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even these writers to be indiscriminately censured and rejected. Truth, like beauty, varies its fashions, and is best recommended by different dresses to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topics of persuasion become necessary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himself to the reigning taste, may always have readers who perhaps would not have looked upon better performances.

To exact of every man who writes, that he should say something new, would be to reduce authors to a small number; to oblige the most fertile genius to say only what is new would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet, surely, there ought to be some bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the same thoughts differently expressed, than with the same books differently decorated.

The good or evil which these secondary writers produce, is seldom of any long duration. As they owe their existence to change of fashion, they commonly disappear when a new fashion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation last from age to age are very few, because there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on present curiosity, and gratify some accidental desire, or produce some temporary conveniency.

But however the writers of the day may despair of future fame, they ought at least to forbear any present mischief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence, they might keep themselves harmless. They might take care to inform themselves before they attempt to inform others, and exert the little influence which they have for honest purposes.

But such is the present state of our literature, that the ancient sage, who thought "a great book a great evil," would now think the multitude of books a multitude of evils. He

would consider a bulky writer who engrossed a year, and a swarm of pamphleteers who stole each an hour, as equal wasters of human life, and would make no other difference between them, than between a beast of prey and a flight of locusts.

No. 86.] Saturday, Dec. 8, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I am a young lady newly married to a young gentleman. Our fortune is large, our minds are vacant, our dispositions gay, our acquaintances numerous, and our relations splendid. We considered that marriage, like life, has its youth; that the first year is the year of gaiety and revel, and resolved to see the shows and feel the joys of London before the increase of our family should confine us to domestic cares and domestic pleasures.

Little time was spent in preparation; the coach was harnessed, and a few days brought us to London, and we alighted at a lodging provided for us by Miss Biddy Trifle, a maiden niece of my husband's father, where we found apartments on a second floor, which my cousin told us would serve us till we could please ourselves with a more commodious and elegant habitation, and which she had taken at a very high price, because it was not worth the while to make a hard bargain for so short a time.

Here I intended to lie concealed till my new clothes were made, and my new lodging hired; but Miss Trifle had so industriously given notice of our arrival to all our acquaintance, that I had the mortification next day of seeing the door thronged with painted coaches and chairs with coronets, and was obliged to receive all my husband's relations on a second floor.

Inconveniences are often balanced by some advantage: the elevation of my apartments furnished a subject for conversation, which, without some such help, we should have been in danger of wanting. Lady Stately told us how many years had passed since she climbed so many steps. Miss Airy ran to the window, and thought it charming to see the walkers so little in the street; and Miss Gentle went to try the same experiment, and screamed to find herself so far above the ground.

They all knew that we intended to remove, and, therefore, all gave me advice about a proper choice. One street was recommended for the purity of its air, another for its freedom from noise, another for its nearness to the park, another because there was but a step from it to all places of diversion, and another, because its inhabitants enjoyed at once the town and country.

I had civility enough to hear every recommendation with a look of curiosity while it was made, and of acquiescence when it was concluded, but in my heart felt no other desire than to be free from the disgrace of a second floor, and cared little where I should fix if the apartments were spacious and splendid.

Next day a chariot was hired, and Miss Trifle was despatched to find a lodging. She returned in the afternoon, with an account of a charming place, to which my husband went in the morning to make the contract. Being young and unexperienced, he took with him his friend Ned Quick, a gentleman of great skill in rooms and furniture, who sees, at a single glance, whatever there is to be commended or censured. Mr. Quick, at the first view of the house, declared that it could not be inhabited, for the sun in the afternoon shone with full glare on the windows of the dining-room.

Miss Trifle went out again and soon discovered another lodging, which Mr. Quick went to survey, and found, that, whenever the wind should blow from the east, all the smoke of the city would be driven upon it.

A magnificent set of rooms was then found in one of the streets near Westminster-Bridge, which Miss Trifle preferred to any which she had yet seen; but Mr. Quick having mused upon it for a time, concluded that it would be too much exposed in the morning to the fogs that rise from the river. Thus Mr. Quick proceeded to give us every day new testimonies of his taste and circumspection; sometimes the street was too narrow for a double range of coaches; sometimes it was an obscure place, not inhabited by persons of quality. Some places were dirty, and some crowded; in some houses the furniture was ill-suited, and in others the stairs were too narrow. He had such fertility of objections that Miss Trifle was at last tired, and desisted from all attempts for our accommodation.

In the meantime I have still continued to see my company on a second floor, and am asked twenty times a day when I am to leave those odious lodgings, in which I live tumultuously without pleasure, and expensively without honour. My husband thinks so highly of Mr. Quick, that he cannot be persuaded to remove without his approbation; and Mr. Quick thinks his reputation raised by the multiplication of difficulties.

In this distress, to whom can I have recourse? I find my temper vitiated by daily disappointment, by the sight of pleasure which I cannot partake, and the possession of riches which I cannot enjoy. Dear Mr. Idler, inform my husband that he is trifling away, in superfluous vexation, the few months which custom has appropriated to delight; that matrimonial quarrels are not easily reconciled between those that have no children; that wherever we settle he must always find some inconvenience; but nothing is so much to be avoided as a perpetual state of inquiry and suspense.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

Peggy Heartless.

No. 87.] Saturday, Dec. 15, 1759.

Of what we know not, we can only judge by what we know. Every novelty appears more

wonderful as it is more remote from any thing with which experience or testimony have hitherto acquainted us; and if it passes farther beyond the notions that we have been accustomed to form, it becomes at last incredible.

We seldom consider that human knowledge is very narrow, that national manners are formed by chance, that uncommon conjunctures of causes produce rare effects, or that what is impossible at one time or place may yet happen in another. It is always easier to deny than to inquire. To refuse credit confers for a moment an appearance of superiority, which every little mind is tempted to assume when it may be gained so cheaply as by withdrawing attention from evidence, and declining the fatigue of comparing probabilities. The most pertinacious and vehement demonstrator may be wearied in time by continual negation; and incredulity, which an old poet, in his address to Raleigh, calls "the wit of fools," obtunds the argument which it cannot answer, as woolsacks deaden arrows though they cannot repel them.

Many relations of travellers have been slighted as fabulous, till more frequent voyages have confirmed their veracity; and it may reasonably be imagined, that many ancient historians are unjustly suspected of falsehood, because our own times afford nothing that resembles what they tell.

Had only the writers of antiquity informed us that there was once a nation in which the wife lay down upon the burning pile, only to mix her ashes with those of her husband, we should have thought it a tale to be told with that of Endymion's commerce with the Moon. Had only a single traveller related that many nations of the earth were black, we should have thought the accounts of the Negroes and of the Phœnix equally credible. But of black men the numbers are too great who are now repining under English cruelty, and the custom of voluntary cremation is not yet lost among the ladies of India.

Few narratives will either to men or women appear more incredible than the histories of the Amazons; of female nations of whose constitution it was the essential and fundamental law, to exclude men from all participation either of public affairs or domestic business; where female armies marched under female captains, female farmers gathered the harvest, female partners danced together, and female wits diverted one another.

Yet several sages of antiquity have transmitted accounts of the Amazons of Caucasus; and of the Amazons of America, who have given their name to the greatest river in the world. Condamine lately found such memorials, as can be expected among erratic and unlettered nations, where events are recorded only by tradition, and new swarms settling in the country from time to time, confuse and efface all traces of former times.

To die with husbands, or to live without them, are the two extremes which the prudence and moderation of European ladies have, in all ages, equally declined; they have never been allured to death by the kindness or civility of the politest nations, nor has the roughness and brutality of more savage countries ever provoked them to doom their male associates to irrevocable banishment. The Bohemian matrons are said to have made one short struggle for superiority, but instead of banishing the men, they contented themselves with condemning them to servile offices; and their constitution thus left imperfect, was quickly overthrown.

There is, I think, no class of English women from whom we are in any danger of Amazonian usurpation. The old maids seem nearest to independence, and most likely to be animated by revenge against masculine authority; they often speak of men with acrimonious vehemence, but it is seldom found that they have any settled hatred against them, and it is yet more rarely observed that they have any kindness for each other. They will not easily combine in any plot; and if they should ever agree to retire and fortify themselves in castles or in mountains, the sentinel will betray the passes in spite, and the garrison will capitulate upon easy terms, if the besiegers have handsome sword knots, and are well supplied with fringe and lace.

The gamesters, if they were united, would make a formidable body; and since they consider men only as beings that are to lose their money, they might live together without any wish for the officiousness of gallantry, or the delights of diversified conversation. But as nothing would hold them together but the hope of plundering one another, their government would fail from the defect of its principles, the men would need only to neglect them, and they would perish in a few weeks by a civil war.

I do not mean to censure the ladies of England as defective in knowledge or in spirit, when I suppose them unlikely to revive the military honours of their sex. The character of the ancient Amazons was rather terrible than lovely; the hand could not be very delicate that was only employed in drawing the bow and brandishing the battle-axe; their power was maintained by cruelty, their courage was deformed by ferocity, and their example only shows that men and women live best together.

No. 88.] Saturday, Dec. 22, 1759.

When the philosophers of the last age were first congregated into the Royal Society, great expectations were raised of the sudden progress of useful arts; the time was supposed to be near, when engines should turn by a perpetual motion, and health be secured by the universal medicine; when learning should be facilitated by a real character, and commerce extended by ships which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempest.

But improvement is naturally slow. The Society met and parted without any visible diminution of the miseries of life. The gout and stone were still painful, the ground that

vas not ploughed brought no harvest, and neither oranges nor grapes would grow upon the hawthorn. At last, those who were disappointed began to be angry; those, likewise, who hated innovation were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps, with too much arrogance, the knowledge of antiquity. And it appears from some of their earliest apologies, that the philosophers felt with great sensibility the unwelcome importunities of those, who were daily asking, "What have ye done?"

The truth is, that little had been done compared with what fame had been suffered to promise; and the question could only be answered by general apologies and by new hopes, which, when they were frustrated, gave a new occasion to the same vexatious inquiry.

This fatal question has disturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part of his life too strictly inquires what he has done, can very seldom receive from his own heart such an account as will give him satisfaction.

We do not, indeed, so often disappoint others as ourselves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourselves to form hopes which we never communicate, and please our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to rise; and when our days and years are passed away in common business or common amusements, and we find, at last, that we have suffered our purposes to sleep till the time of action is past, we are reproached only by our own reflections; neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the rest of mankind; that we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what task we had proposed, and, therefore, cannot discern whether it is finished.

He that compares what he has done with what he has left undone, will feel the effect which must always follow the comparison of imagination with reality; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpose he came into the world; he will repine that he shall leave behind him no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the system of life, but has glided from youth to age among the crowd, without any effort for distinction.

Man is seldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only because every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want diligence then power, and sooner confesses the depravity of his will than the imbecility of his nature.

From this mistaken notion of human greatness it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great advances in wisdom so loudly declare that they despise themselves. If I had ever found any of the self-contemners much irritated or pained by the consciousness of their meanness, I should have given them consolation by observing, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being who, with respect to the multitudes about him is himself little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the Supreme Master of the universe to improve all the opportunities of good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity such abilities as are bestowed upon him. But he has no reason to repine, though his abilities are small and his opportunities few. He that has improved the virtue, or advanced the happiness of one fellow-creature, he that has ascertained a single moral proposition, or added one useful experiment to natural knowledge, may be contented with his own performance, and, with respect to mortals like himself, may demand, like Augustus, to be dismissed at his departure with applause.

No. 89.] SATURDAY, DEC. 29, 1759.

Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου. EPICT.

How evil came into the world—for what reason it is that life is overspread with such boundless varieties of misery—why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think, merely to be wretched, and to pass his time from youth to age in fearing or in suffering calamities, is a question which philosophers have long asked, and which philosophy could never answer.

Religion informs us that misery and sin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a disorder of the harmony of nature; and by that Providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poisons, vice was checked by misery, lest it should swell to universal and unlimited dominion.

A state of innocence and happiness is so remote from all that we have ever seen, that though we can easily conceive it possible, and may, therefore, hope to attain it, yet our speculations upon it must be general and confused. We can discover that where there is universal innocence, there will probably be universal happiness; for why should afflictions be permitted to infest beings who are not in danger of corruption from blessings, and where there is no use of terror nor cause of punishment? But in a world like ours, where our senses assault us, and our hearts betray us, we should pass on from crime to crime, heedless and remorseless, if misery did not stand in our way, and our own pains admonish us of our folly.

Almost all the moral good which is left among us, is the apparent effect of physical evil.

Goodness is divided by divines into soberness, righteousness, and godliness. Let it be examined how each of these duties would be practised if there were no physical evil to enforce it.

Sobriety, or temperance, is nothing but the forbearance of pleasure; and if pleasure was not followed by pain, who would forbear it? We see every hour those in whom the desire of

present indulgence overpowers all sense of past and all foresight of future misery. In a remission of the gout, the drunkard returns to his wine, and the glutton to his feast; and if neither disease nor poverty were felt or dreaded, every one would sink down in idle sensuality, without any care of others, or of himself. To eat and drink, and lie down to sleep, would be the whole business of mankind.

Righteousness, or the system of social duty, may be subdivided into justice and charity. Of justice one of the heathen sages has shown, with great acuteness, that it was impressed upon mankind only by the inconveniencies which injustice had produced. "In the first ages," says he, "men acted without any rule but the impulse of desire; they practised injustice upon others, and suffered it from others in their turn; but in time it was discoveed, that the pain of suffering wrong was greater than the pleasure of doing it; and mankind, by a general compact submitted to the restraint of laws, and resigned the pleasure to escape the pain."

Of charity it is superfluous to observe, that it could have no place if there were no want; for of a virtue which could not be practised, the omission could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occasional but the efficient cause of charity; we are incited to the relief of misery by the consciousness that we have the same nature with the sufferer, that we are in danger of the same distresses, and may sometimes implore the same assistance.

Godliness, or piety, is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extension of the thoughts to another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is invisible. None would have recourse to an invisible power, but that all other subjects had eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are discontented with the present. If the senses were feasted with perpetual pleasure, they would always keep the mind in subjection. Reason has no authority over us, but by its power to warn us against evil.

In childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, religion is impressed upon them, and the first years of almost all who have been well educated are passed in a regular discharge of the duties of piety. But as we advance forward into the crowds of life, innumerable delights solicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares distract our attention; the time of youth is passed in noisy frolics; manhood is led on from hope to hope, and from project to project; the dissoluteness of pleasure, the inebriation of success, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition chain down the mind alike to the present scene, nor is it remembered how soon this mist of trifles must be scattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be lost for ever in the gulf of eternity. To this consideration scarcely any man is awakened but by some pressing and resistless evil. The death of those from whom he derived his pleasures, or to whom he destined his possessions; some disease which shows him the vanity of all external acquisitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his prospects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another state, and when he has contended with the tempests of life till his strength fails him, he flies, at last to the shelter of religion.

That misery does not make all virtuous, experience too clearly informs us; but it is no less certain that of what virtue there is, misery produces far the greater part. Physical evil may be, therefore, endured with patience, since it is the cause of moral good; and patience itself is one virtue by which we are prepared for that state in which evil shall be no more.

No. 90.] Saturday, Jan. 5, 1760.

It is a complaint which has been made from time to time, and which seems to have lately become more frequent, that English oratory, however forcible in argument, or elegant in expression, is deficient and inefficacious, because our speakers want the grace and energy of action.

Among the numerous projectors who are desirous to refine our manners, and improve our faculties, some are willing to supply the deficiency of our speakers. We have had more than one extortion to study the neglected art of moving the passions, and have been encouraged to believe that our tongues, however feeble in themselves, may, by the help of our hands and legs, obtain an uncontrollable dominion over the most stubborn audience, animate the insensible, engage the careless, force tears from the obdurate, and money from the avaricious.

If by sleight of hand or nimbleness of foot, all these wonders can be performed, he that shall neglect to attain the free use of his limbs may be justly censured as criminally lazy. But I am afraid that no specimen of such effects will easily be shown. If I could once find a speaker in 'Change Alley raising the price of stocks by the power of persuasive gestures, I should very zealously recommend the study of his art; but having never seen any action by which language was much assisted, I have been hitherto inclined to doubt whether my countrymen are not blamed too hastily for their calm and motionless utterance.

Foreigners of many nations accompany their speech with action: but why should their example have more influence upon us than ours upon them? Customs are not to be changed but for better. Let those who desire to reform us show the benefits of the change proposed. When the Frenchman waves his hands, and writhes his body, in recounting the revolutions of a game of cards, or the Neapolitan, who tells the hour of the day, shows upon his fingers the number which he mentions, I do not perceive that their manual exercise is of much use, or that they leave any image more deeply impressed by their bustle and vehemence of communication.

Upon the English stage there is no want of action, but the difficulty of making it at once various and proper, and its perpetual tendency to become ridiculous, notwithstanding all the advantages which art and show, and custom and prejudice can give it, may prove how little it can be admitted into any other place, where it can have no recommendation but from truth and nature.

The use of English oratory is only at the bar, in the parliament, and in the church. Neither the judges of our laws, nor the representatives of our people, would be much affected by laboured gesticulation, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast, or turned his eyes sometimes to the ceiling, and sometimes to the floor. Upon men intent only upon truth, the arm of an orator has little power; a credible testimony, or a cogent argument, will overcome all the art of modulation, and all the violence of contortion.

It is well known that, in the city which may be called the parent of oratory, all the arts of mechanical persuasion were banished from the court of supreme judicature. The judges of the Areopagus considered action and vociferation as a foolish appeal to the external senses, and unworthy to be practised before those who had no desire of idle amusement, and whose only pleasure was to discover right.

Whether action may not be yet of use in churches, where the preacher addresses a mingled audience, may deserve inquiry. It is certain that the senses are more powerful as the reason is weaker: and that he whose ears convey little to his mind, may sometimes listen with his eyes till truth may gradually take possession of his heart. If there be any use of gesticulation, it must be applied to the ignorant and rude, who will be more affected by vehemence than delighted by propriety. In the pulpit little action can be proper, for action can illustrate nothing but that to which it may be referred by nature or by custom. He that imitates by his hand a motion which he describes, explains it by a natural similitude; he that lays his hand on his breast, when he expresses pity, enforces his words by a customary allusion. But theology has few topics to which action can be appropriated; that action which is vague and indeterminate will at last settle into habit, and habitual peculiarities are quickly ridiculous.

It is, perhaps, the character of the English, to despise trifles; and that art may surely be accounted a trifle which is at once useless and ostentatious, which can seldom be practised with propriety, and which, as the mind is more cultivated, is less powerful. Yet as all innocent means are to be used for the propagation of truth, I would not deter those who are employed in preaching to common congregations from any practice which they may find persuasive; for, compared with the conversion of sinners, propriety and elegance are less than nothing.

No. 91.] Saturday, Jan. 12, 1760.

It is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed upon something remote. In the same manner present opportunities are neglected, and attainable good is slighted, by minds busied in extensive ranges, and intent upon future advantages. Life, however short, is made still shorter by waste of time, and its progress towards happiness, though naturally slow, is yet retarded by unnecessary labour.

The difficulty of obtaining knowledge is universally confessed. To fix deeply in the mind the principles of science, to settle their limitations, and deduce the long succession of their consequences; to comprehend the whole compass of complicated systems, with all the arguments, objections, and solutions, and to reposite in the intellectual treasury the numberless facts, experiments, apophthegms, and positions, which must stand single in the memory, and of which none has only perceptible connection with the rest, is a task which, though undertaken with ardour, and pursued with diligence, must at last be left unfinished by the frailty of our nature.

To make the way to learning either less short or less smooth, is certainly absurd; yet this is the apparent effect of the prejudice which seems to prevail among us in favour of foreign authors, and of the contempt of our native literature, which this excursive curiosity must necessarily produce. Every man is more speedily instructed by his own language, than by any other; before we search the rest of the world for teachers, let us try whether we may not spare our trouble by finding them at home.

The riches of the English language are much greater than they are commonly supposed. Many useful and valuable books lie buried in shops and libraries, unknown and unexamined, unless some lucky compiler opens them by chance, and finds an easy spoil of wit and learning. I am far from intending to insinuate that other languages are not necessary to him who aspires to eminence, and whose whole life is devoted to study; but to him who reads only for amusement, or whose purpose is not to deck himself with the honour of literature, but to be qualified for domestic usefulness, and sit down content with subordinate reputation, we have authors sufficient to fill up all the vacancies of his time, and gratify most of his wishes for information.

Of our poets I need say little, because they are, perhaps, the only authors to whom their country has done justice. We consider the whole succession from Spencer to Pope, as superior to any names which the continent can boast; and therefore the poets of other nations, however familiarly they may be sometimes mentioned, are very little read, except by those who design to borrow their beauties.

There is I think, not one of the liberal arts which may not be competently learned in the English language. He that searches after mathematical knowledge may busy himself among his own countrymen, and will find one or other able to instruct him in every part of

those abstruse sciences. He that is delighted with experiments, and wishes to know the nature of bodies from certain and visible effects, is happily placed where the mechanical philosophy was first established by a public institution, and from which it was spread to all other countries.

The more airy and elegant studies of philology and criticism have little need of any foreign help. Though our language, not being very analogical, gives few opportunities for grammatical researches, yet we have not wanted authors who have considered the principles of speech; and with critical writings we abound sufficiently to enable pedantry to impose rules which can seldom be observed, and vanity to talk or books which are seldom read.

But our own language has, from the Reformation to the present time, been chiefly dignified and adorned by the works of our divines, who, considered as commentators, controvertists, or preachers, have undoubtedly left all other nations far behind them. No vulgar language can boast such treasures of theological knowledge, or such multitudes of authors at once learned, elegant, and pious. Other countries, and other communions, have authors perhaps equal in abilities and diligence to ours; but if we unite number with excellence, there is certainly no nation which must not allow us to be superior. Of morality little is necessary to be said, because it is comprehended in practical divinity, and is, perhaps, better taught in English sermons than in any other books ancient and modern. Nor shall I dwell on our excellence in metaphysical speculations, because he that reads the works of our divines will easily discover how far human subtility has been able to penetrate.

Political knowledge is forced upon us by the form of our constitution; and all the mysteries of government are discovered in the attack or defence of every minister. The original law of society, the rights of subjects, and the prerogatives of kings, have been considered with the utmost nicety, sometimes profoundly investigated, and sometimes familiarly explained.

Thus copiously instructive is the English language; and thus needless is all recourse to foreign writers. Let us not, therefore, make our neighbours proud by soliciting help which we do not want, nor discourage our own industry by difficulties which we need not suffer.

No. 92.] Saturday, Jan. 13, 1760.

Whatever is useful or honourable will be desired by many who never can obtain it; and that which cannot be obtained when it is desired, artifice or folly will be diligent to counterfeit. Those to whom fortune has denied gold and diamonds, decorate themselves with stones and metals, which have something of the show, but little of the value; and every moral excellence, or intellectual faculty, has some vice or folly which imitates its appearance.

Every man wishes to be wise, and they who cannot be wise are almost always cunning. The less is the real discernment of those whom business or conversation brings together, the more illusions are practised, nor is caution ever so necessary as with associates or opponents of feeble minds.

Cunning differs from wisdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the sunshine goes boldly forward by the nearest way; he sees that where the path is straight and even he may proceed in security, and where it is rough and crooked he easily complies with the turns, and avoids the obstructions. But the traveller in the dusk fears more as he sees less; he knows there may be danger, and therefore suspects that he is never safe, tries every step before he fixes his foot, and shrinks at every noise, lest violence should approach him. Wisdom comprehends at once the end and the means, estimates easiness or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning discovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of stratagems and superfluity of suspicion. The man of cunning always considers that he can never be too safe, and therefore always keeps himself enveloped in a mist, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curiosity.

Upon this principle Tom Double has formed a habit of eluding the most harmless question. What he has no inclination to answer, he pretends sometimes not to hear, and endeavours to divert the inquirer's attention by some other subject; but if he be pressed hard by repeated interrogation, he always evades a direct reply. Ask him whom he likes best on the stage; he is ready to tell that there are several excellent performers. Inquire when he was last at the coffee-house; he replies, that the weather has been bad lately. Desire him to tell the age of any of his acquaintance; he immediately mentions another who is older or younger.

Will Puzzle values himself upon a long reach. He foresees every thing before it will happen, though he never relates his prognostications till the event is passed. Nothing has come to pass for these twenty years of which Mr. Puzzle had not given broad hints, and told at least that it was not proper to tell. Of those predictions, which every conclusion will equally verify, he always claims the credit, and wonders that his friends did not understand them. He supposes very truly, that much may be known which he knows not, and therefore pretends to know much of which he and all mankind are equally ignorant. I desired his opinion, yesterday, of the German war, and was told, that if the Prussians were well supported, something great may be expected; but that they have very powerful enemies to encounter; that the Austrian general has long experience, and the Russians are hardy and resolute; but that no human power is invincible. I then drew the conversation to our own affairs, and invited him to balance the probabilities of war and peace. He told me that war requires courage, and negotiation judgment, and that the time will come when it will be seen whether our skill in treaty is equal to our bravery in battle. To this general prattle he will appeal hereafter, and will demand to

have his foresight applauded, whoever shall at last be conquered or victorious.

With Ned Smuggle all is a secret. He believes himself watched by observation and malignity on every side, and rejoices in the dexterity by which he has escaped snares that never were laid. Ned holds that a man is never deceived if he never trusts, and therefore will not tell the name of his tailor or his hatter. He rides out every morning for the air, and pleases himself with thinking that nobody knows where he has been. When he dines with a friend, he never goes to his house the nearest way, but walks up a bye street to perplex the scent. When he has a coach called, he never tells him at the door the true place to which he is going, but stops him in the way, that he may give him directions where nobody can hear him. The price of what he buys or sells is always concealed. He often takes lodgings in the country by a wrong name, and thinks that the world is wondering where he can be hid. All these transactions he registers in a book, which, he says, will some time or other amaze posterity.

It is remarked by Bacon, that many men try to procure reputation only by objections, of which, if they are once admitted, the nullity never appears, because the design is laid aside. "This false feint of wisdom," says he, "is the ruin of business." The whole power of cunning is privative; to say nothing, and to do nothing, is the utmost of its reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature, and mean by art, are sometimes able to rise by the miscarriages of bravery and the openness of integrity; and by watching failures, and snatching opportunities obtain advantages which belong properly to higher characters.

No. 93.] Saturday, Jan. 26, 1760.

Sam Softly was bred a sugar-baker; but succeeding to a considerable estate on the death of his elder brother, he retired early from business, married a fortune, and settled in a country-house near Kentish-town. Sam, who formerly was a sportsman, and in his apprenticeship used to frequent Barnet races, keeps a high chaise, with a brace of seasoned geldings. During the summer months, the principal passion and employment of Sam's life is to visit, in this vehicle, the most eminent seats of the nobility and gentry in different parts of the kingdom, with his wife and some select friends. By these periodical excursions Sam gratifies many important purposes. He assists the several pregnancies of his wife; he shows his chaise to the best advantage; he indulges his insatiable curiosity for finery, which, since he has turned gentleman, has grown upon him to an extraordinary degree; he discovers taste and spirit; and, what is above all, he finds frequent opportunities of displaying to the party, at every house he sees, his knowledge of family connections. At first Sam was contented with driving a friend between London and his villa. Here he prided himself in pointing out the boxes of the citizens on each side of the road, with an accurate detail of their respective failures or successes in trade; and harangued on the several equipages that were accidentally passing. Here, too, the seats interspersed on the surrounding hills, afforded ample matter for Sam's curious discoveries. For one, he told his companion, a rich Jew had offered money; and that a retired widow was courted at another, by an eminent dry-salter. At the same time he discussed the utility, and enumerated the expenses, of the Islington turnpike. But Sam's ambition is at present raised to nobler undertakings.

When the happy hour of the annual expedition arrives, the seat of the chaise is furnished with "Ogilvy's Book of Roads," and a choice quantity of cold tongues. The most alarming disaster which can happen to our hero, who thinks he "throws a whip" admirably well, is to be overtaken in a road which affords no "quarter" for wheels. Indeed, few men possess more skill or discernment for concerting and conducting a "party of pleasure." When a seat is to be surveyed, he has a peculiar talent in selecting some shady bench in the park, where the company may most commodiously refresh themselves with cold tongue, chicken, and French rolls; and is very sagacious in discovering what cool temple in the garden will be best adapted for drinking tea, brought for this purpose, in the afternoon, and from which the chaise may be resumed with the greatest convenience. In viewing the house itself, he is principally attracted by the chairs and beds, concerning the cost of which his minute inquiries generally gain the clearest information. An agate table easily diverts his eyes from the most capital strokes of Rubens, and a Turkey carpet has more charms than a Titian. Sam, however, dwells with some attention on the family portraits, particularly the most modern ones; and as this is a topic on which the housekeeper usually harangues in a more copious manner, he takes this opportunity of improving his knowledge of intermarriages. Yet, notwithstanding this appearance of satisfaction, Sam has some objection to all he sees. One house has too much gilding; at another, the chimney-pieces are all monuments; at a third, he conjectures that the beautiful canal must certainly be dried up in a hot summer. He despises the statues at Wilton, because he thinks he can see much better carving at Westminster Abbey. But there is one general objection which he is sure to make at almost every house, particularly at those which are most distinguished. He allows that all the apartments are extremely fine, but adds, with a sneer, that they are too fine to be inhabited.

Misapplied genius most commonly proves ridiculous. Had Sam, as nature intended, contentedly continued in the calmer and less conspicuous pursuits of sugar-baking, he might have been a respectable and useful character. At present he dissipates his life in a specious idleness, which neither improves himself nor his friends. Those talents which

might have benefitted society, he exposes to contempt by false pretensions. He affects pleasures which he cannot enjoy, and is acquainted only with those subjects on which he has no right to talk, and which it is no merit to understand.

No. 94.] Saturday, Feb. 2, 1760.

It is common to find young men ardent and diligent in the pursuit of knowledge; but the progress of life very often produces laxity and indifference; and not only those who are at liberty to choose their business and amusements, but those likewise whose professions engage them in literary inquiries, pass the latter part of their time without improvement, and spend the day rather in any other entertainment than that which they might find among their books.

This abatement of the vigour of curiosity is sometimes imputed to the insufficiency of learning. Men are supposed to remit their labours, because they find their labours to have been vain; and to search no longer after truth and wisdom, because they at last despair of finding them.

But this reason is for the most part very falsely assigned. Of learning, as of virtue, it may be affirmed, that it is at once honoured and neglected. Whoever forsakes it will for ever look after it with longing, lament the loss which he does not endeavour to repair, and desire the good which he wants resolution to seize and keep. The Idler never applauds his own idleness, nor does any man repent of the diligence of his youth.

So many hindrances may obstruct the acquisition of knowledge, that there is little reason for wondering that it is in a few hands. To the greater part of mankind the duties of life are inconsistent with much study; and the hours which they would spend upon letters must be stolen from their occupations and their families. Many suffer themselves to be lured by more sprightly and luxurious pleasures from the shades of contemplation, where they find seldom more than a calm delight, such as though greater than all others, its certainty and its duration being reckoned with its power of gratification, is yet easily quitted for some extemporary joy, which the present moment offers, and another, perhaps, will put out of reach.

It is the great excellence of learning, that it borrows very little from time or place; it is not confined to season or to climate, to cities, or to the country, but may be cultivated and enjoyed where no other pleasure can be obtained. But this quality, which constitutes much of its value, is one occasion of neglect; what may be done at all times with equal propriety is deferred from day to day, till the mind is gradually reconciled to the omission, and the attention is turned to other objects. Thus habitual idleness gains too much power to be conquered, and the soul shrinks from the idea of intellectual labour and intenseness of meditation.

That those who profess to advance learning sometimes obstruct it, cannot be denied; the continual multiplication of books not only distracts choice, but disappoints inquiry. To him that has moderately stored his mind with images, few writers afford any novelty; or what little they have to add to the common stock of learning, is so buried in the mass of general notions, that like silver mingled with the ore of lead, it is too little to pay for the labour of separation; and he that has often been deceived by the promise of a title, at last grows weary of examining, and is tempted to consider all as equally fallacious.

There are, indeed, some repetitions always lawful, because they never deceive. He that writes the history of past times, undertakes only to decorate known facts by new beauties of method or style, or at most to illustrate them by his own reflections. The author of a system, whether moral or physical, is obliged to nothing beyond care of selection and regularity of disposition. But there are others who claim the name of authors merely to disgrace it, and fill the world with volumes only to bury letters in their own rubbish. The traveller who tells, in a pompous folio, that he saw the Pantheon at Rome, and the Medicean Venus at Florence: the natural historian, who, describing the productions of a narrow island, recounts all that it has in common with every other part of the world; the collector of antiquities, that accounts every thing a curiosity which the ruins of Herculaneum happen to emit, though an instrument already shown in a thousand repositories, or a cup common to the ancients, the moderns, and all mankind, may be justly censured as the persecutors of students, and the thieves of that time which never can be restored.

No. 95.] Saturday, Feb. 9, 1760.

TO THE IDLER.

Mr. Idler,

It is, I think, universally agreed, that seldom any good is gotten by complaint; yet we find that few forbear to complain but those who are afraid of being reproached at the authors of their own miseries. I hope, therefore, for the common permission to lay my case before you and your readers, by which I shall disburden my heart, though I cannot hope to receive either assistance or consolation.

I am a trader, and owe my fortune to frugality and industry. I began with little; but by the easy and obvious method of spending less than I gain, I have every year added something to my stock, and expect to have a seat in the common-council, at the next election.

My wife, who was as prudent as myself, died six years ago, and left me one son and one daughter, for whose sake I resolved never to marry again, and rejected the overtures of Mrs. Squeeze, the broker's widow, who had ten thousand pounds at her own disposal.

I bred my son at a school near Islington; and when he had learned arithmetic, and wrote a good hand, I took him into the shop, designing, in about ten years, to retire to Stratford or Hackney, and leave him established in the business.

For four years he was diligent and sedate, entered the shop before it was opened, and when it was shut always examined the pins of the window. In any intermission of business it was his constant practise to peruse the ledger. I had always great hopes of him, when I observed how sorrowfully he would shake his head over a bad debt, and how eagerly he would listen to me when I told him that he might at one time or other become an alderman.

We lived together with mutual confidence, till unluckily a visit was paid him by two of his school-fellows who were placed, I suppose, in the army, because they were fit for nothing better: they came glittering in their military dress, accosted their old acquaintance, and invited him to a tavern, where, as I have been since informed, they ridiculed the meanness of commerce, and wondered how a youth of spirit could spend the prime of his life behind a counter.

I did not suspect any mischief. I knew my son was never without money in his pocket, and was better able to pay his reckoning than his companions; and expected to see him return triumphing in his own advantages, and congratulating himself that he was not one of those who expose their heads to a musket bullet for three shillings a day.

He returned sullen and thoughtful; I supposed him sorry for the hard fortune of his friends; and tried to comfort him by saying that the war would soon be at an end, and that, if they had any honest occupation, half-pay would be a pretty help. He looked at me with indignation; and snatching up his candle, told me, as he went up stairs, that "he hoped to see a battle yet."

Why he should hope to see a battle I could not conceive, but let him go quietly to sleep away his folly. Next day he made two mistakes in the first bill, disobliged a customer by surly answers and dated all his entries in the journal in a wrong month. At night he met his military companions again, came home late, and quarrelled with the maid.

From this fatal interview he has gradually lost all his laudable passions and desires. He soon grew useless in the shop, where, indeed, I did not willingly trust him any longer; for he often mistook the price of goods to his own loss, and once gave a promissory note instead of a receipt.

I did not know to what degree he was corrupted, till an honest tailor gave me notice that he had bespoke a laced suit, which was to be left for him at a house kept by the sister of one of my journeymen. I went to this clandestine lodging, and found to my amazement, all the ornaments of a fine gentleman, which he has taken upon credit, or purchased with money subducted from the shop.

This detection has made him desperate. He now openly declares his resolution to be a gentleman; says that his soul is too great for a counting-house; ridicules the conversation of city taverns; talks of new plays, and boxes, and ladies; gives dutchesses for his toasts; carries silver, for readiness, in his waistcoat pocket; and comes home at night in a chair, with such thunders at the door as have more than once brought the watchmen from their stands.

Little expenses will not hurt us: and I could forgive a few juvenile frolics, if he would be careful of the main: but his favourite topic is contempt of money, which he says is of no use but to be spent. Riches, without honour, he holds empty things; and once told me to my face, that wealthy plodders were only purveyors to men of spirit.

He is always impatient in the company of his old friends, and seldom speaks till he is warmed with wine; he then entertains us with accounts that we do not desire to hear, of intrigues among lords and ladies, and quarrels between officers of the guards; shows a miniature on his snuff-box, and wonders that any man can look upon the new dancer without rapture.

All this is very provoking; and yet all this might be borne, if the boy could support his pretensions. But, whatever he may think, he is yet far from the accomplishments which he has endeavoured to purchase at so dear a rate. I have watched him in public places. He sneaks in like a man that knows he is where he should not be; he is proud to catch the slightest salutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from dress, but my booby looks always more meanly for his finery. Dear Mr. Idler, tell him what must at last become of a fop, whom pride will not suffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a shop forbid to be a gentleman.

I am, Sir, &c.

Tim Wainscot.

No. 96.] Saturday, Feb. 16, 1760.

Hacho, a king of Lapland, was in his youth the most renowned of the Northern warriors. His martial achievements remain engraved on a pillar of flint in the rocks of Hanga, and are to this day solemnly carolled to the harp by the Laplanders, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly festivities. Such was his intrepid spirit, that he ventured to pass the lake Vether to the isle of Wizards, where he descended alone into the dreary vault in which a magician had been kept bound for six ages, and read the Gothic characters inscribed on his brazen mace. His eye was so piercing, that as ancient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies only by looking at them. At twelve years of age he carried an iron vessel of a prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the presence of all the chiefs of his father's castle.

Nor was he less celebrated for his prudence and wisdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembered and repeated among Laplanders. To express the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to say, "Odin's belt is al-

ways buckled." To show that the most prosperous condition of life is often hazardous, his lesson was, "When you slide on the smoothest ice, beware of pits beneath." He consoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen deserts of Lapland, and resolved to seek some warmer climate, by telling them, that the Eastern nations, notwithstanding their boasted fertility, passed every night amidst the horrors of anxious apprehension, and were inexpressibly affrighted, and almost stunned, every morning, with the noise of the sun while he was rising.

His temperance and severity of manner were his chief praise. In his early years he never tasted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He constantly slept in his armour, with his spear in his hand; nor would he use a battle-axe whose handle was inlaid with brass. He did not, however persevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he close his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the gulos, or wild dog, being bewildered in a solitary forest, and having passed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreshment, he discovered a large store of honey in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never tasted before; and being at once faint and hungry, he fed greedily upon it. From this unusual and delicious repast he received so much satisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be served up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to lose his native relish for simple fare, and contracted a habit of indulging himself in delicacies; he ordered the delightful gardens of his castle to be thrown open, in which the most luscious fruits had been suffered to ripen and decay, unobserved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious desserts. At length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement; or a necessary ingredient to his new way of living; and having once tasted it, he was tempted by little and little, to give a loose to the excesses of intoxication. His general simplicity of life was changed; he perfumed his apartments by burning the wood of the most aromatic fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the rein-deer. Indolence and effeminacy stole upon him by pleasing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the sinews of his resolution, and extinguished his thirst of military glory.

While Hacho was thus immersed in pleasure and in repose, it was reported to him one morning, that the preceding night a disastrous omen had been discovered, and that bats and hideous birds had drank up the oil which nourished the perpetual lamp in the temple of Odin. About the same time, a messenger arrived to tell him, that the king of Norway had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. Hacho, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, roused himself from his voluptuous lethargy, and recollecting some faint and few sparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined battle in the forest where Hacho had been lost after hunting; and it so happened, that the king of Norway challenged him to single combat, near the place where he had tasted the honey. The Lapland chief, languid and long disused to arms, was soon overpowered; he fell to the ground; and before his insulting adversary struck his head from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the Laplanders still use as an early lesson to their children: "The vicious man should date his destruction from the first temptation. How justly do I fall a sacrifice to sloth and luxury, in the place where I first yielded to those allurements which seduced me to deviate from temperance and innocence! the honey which I tasted in this forest, and not the hand of the king of Norway, conquers Hacho."

No. 97.] Saturday, Feb. 23, 1760.

It may, I think, be justly observed, that few books disappoint their readers more than the narrations of travellers. One part of mankind is naturally curious to learn the sentiments, manners, and condition of the rest: and every mind that has leisure or power to extend its views must be desirous of knowing in what proportion Providence has distributed the blessings of nature, or the advantages of art, among the several nations of the earth.

This general desire easily procures readers to every book from which it can expect gratification. The adventurer upon unknown coasts, and the describer of distant regions, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleasure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge and rectify our opinions; but when the volume is opened, nothing is found but such general accounts as leave no distinct idea behind them, or such minute enumerations as few can read with either profit or delight.

Every writer of travels should consider, that, like all other authors, he undertakes either to instruct or please, or to mingle pleasure with instruction. He that instructs, must offer to the mind something to be imitated, or something to be avoided; he that pleases must offer new images to his reader, and enable him to form a tacit comparison of his own state with that of others.

The greater part of travellers tell nothing, because their method of travelling supplies them with nothing to be told. He that enters a town at night and surveys it in the morning, and then hastens away to another place, and guesses at the manners of the inhabitants by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may please himself for a time with a hasty change of scenes, and a confused remembrance of palaces and churches; he may gratify his eye with a variety of landscapes, and regale his palate with a succession of vintages: but let him be contented to please himself without endeavouring to disturb others. Why should he record excursions by which

nothing could be learned, or wish to make a show of knowledge, which, without some power of intuition, unknown to other mortals, he never could attain?

Of those who crowd the world with their itineraries, some have no other purpose than to describe the face of the country; those who sit idle at home, and are curious to know what is done or suffered in distant countries, may be informed by one of these wanderers, that on a certain day he set out early with the caravan, and in the first hour's march saw, towards the south, a hill covered with trees, then passed over a stream, which ran northward with a swift course, but which is probably dry in the summer months; that an hour after he saw something to the right which looked at a distance like a castle with towers, but which he discovered afterward to be a craggy rock; that he then entered a valley, in which he saw several trees tall and flourishing, watered by a rivulet not marked in the maps, of which he was not able to learn the name; that the road afterward grew stony, and the country uneven, where he observed among the hills many hollows worn by torrents, and was told that the road was passable only part of the year, that going on they found the remains of a building, once perhaps a fortress to secure the pass, or to restrain the robbers, of which the present inhabitants can give no other account than that it is haunted by fairies; that they went to dine at the foot of a rock, and travelled the rest of the day along the banks of a river, from which the road turned aside towards evening, and brought them within sight of a village, which was once a considerable town, but which afforded them neither good victuals nor commodious lodging.

Thus he conducts his reader through wet and dry, over rough and smooth, without incidents, without reflection: and, if he obtains his company for another day, will dismiss him again at night, equally fatigued with a like succession of rocks and streams, mountains and ruins.

This is the common style of those sons of enterprise, who visit savage countries, and range through solitude and desolation; who pass a desert, and tell that it is sandy; who cross a valley, and find that it is green. There are others of more delicate sensibility, that visit only the realms of elegance and softness; that wander through Italian palaces, and amuse the gentle reader with catalogues of pictures; that hear masses in magnificent churches, and recount the number of the pillars or variegations of the pavement. And there are yet others, who, in disdain of trifles, copy inscriptions elegant and rude, ancient and modern; and transcribe into their book the walls of every edifice, sacred or civil. He that reads these books must consider his labour as its own reward; for he will find nothing on which attention can fix, or which memory can retain.

He that would travel for the entertainment of others, should remember that the great object of remark is human life. Every nation has something particular in its manufactures, its works of genius, its medicines, its agriculture, its customs, and its policy. He only is a useful traveller, who brings home something by which his country may be benefitted; who procures some supply of want, or some mitigation of evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others, to improve it whenever it is worse, and whenever it is better to enjoy it.

No. 98.] Saturday, March 1, 1760.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I am the daughter of a gentleman, who during his life-time enjoyed a small income which arose from a pension from the court, by which he was enabled to live in a genteel and comfortable manner.

By the situation of life in which he was placed, he was frequently introduced into the company of those of much greater fortunes than his own, among whom he was always received with complaisance, and treated with civility.

At six years of age I was sent to a boarding-school in the country, at which I continued till my father's death. This melancholy event happened at a time when I was by no means of a sufficient age to manage for myself, while the passions of youth continued unsubdued, and before experience could guide my sentiments or my actions.

I was then taken from school by an uncle, to the care of whom my father had committed me on his dying bed. With him I lived several years; and as he was unmarried, the management of his family was committed to me. In this character I always endeavoured to acquit myself, if not with applause, at least without censure.

At the age of twenty-one, a young gentleman of some fortune paid his addresses to me, and offered me terms of marriage. This proposal I should readily have accepted, because from vicinity of residence, and from many opportunities of observing his behaviour, I had in some sort contracted an affection for him. My uncle, for what reason I do not know, refused his consent to this alliance, though it would have been complied with by the father of the young gentleman; and, as the future condition of my life was wholly dependant on him, I was not willing to disoblige him, and therefore, though unwillingly, declined the offer.

My uncle, who possessed a plentiful fortune, frequently hinted to me in conversation, that at his death I should be provided for in such a manner that I should be able to make my future life comfortable and happy. As this promise was often repeated, I was the less anxious about any provision for myself. In a short time my uncle was taken ill, and though all possible means were made use of for his recovery, in a few days he died.

The sorrow arising from the loss of a relation, by whom I had been always treated with the greatest kindness, however grievous, was not the worst of my misfortunes. As he enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of health, he was the less mindful of his dissolution, and died intestate; by which means his whole fortune devolved to a nearer relation, the heir at law.

Thus excluded from all hopes of living in the manner with which I have so long flattered myself, I am doubtful what method I shall take to procure a decent maintenance. I have been educated in a manner that has set me above a state of servitude, and my situation renders me unfit for the company of those with whom I have hitherto conversed. But, though disappointed in my expectations, I do not despair. I will hope that assistance may still be obtained for innocent distress, and that friendship, though rare, is yet not impossible to be found.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
Sophia Heedful.

No. 99.] Saturday, March 8, 1760.

As Ortogrul of Basra was one day wandering along the streets of Bagdat, musing on the varieties of merchandise which the shops offered to his view, and observing the different occupations which busied the multitudes on every side, he was awakened from the tranquillity of meditation by a crowd that obstructed his passage. He raised his eyes, and saw the chief vizier, who having returned from the divan, was entering his palace.

Ortogrul mingled with the attendants, and being supposed to have some petition for the vizier, was permitted to enter. He surveyed the spaciousness of the apartments, admired the walls hung with golden tapestry, and the floors covered with silken carpets, and despised the simple neatness of his own little habitation.

Surely, said he to himself, this palace is the seat of happiness, where pleasure succeeds to pleasure, and discontent and sorrow can have no admission. Whatever nature has provided for the delight of sense, is here spread forth to be enjoyed. What can mortals hope or imagine, which the master of this palace has not obtained? The dishes of luxury cover his table, the voice of harmony lulls him in his bowers; he breathes the fragrance of the groves of Java, and sleeps upon the down of the cygnets of Ganges. He speaks, and his mandate is obeyed; he wishes, and his wish is gratified; all whom he sees obey him, and all whom he hears flatter him. How different, Ortogrul, is thy condition, who art doomed to the perpetual torments of unsatisfied desire, and who has no amusement in thy power that can withhold thee from thy own reflections! They tell thee that thou art wise; but what does wisdom avail with poverty? None will flatter the poor, and the wise have very little power of flattering themselves. That man is surely the most wretched of the sons of wretchedness, who lives with his own faults and follies always before him, who has none to reconcile him to himself by praise and veneration. I have long sought content, and have not found it; I will from this moment endeavour to be rich.

Full of his new resolution, he shuts himself in his chamber for six months, to deliberate how he should grow rich: he sometimes proposed to offer himself as a counsellor to one of the kings of India, and sometimes resolved to dig for diamonds in the mines of Golconda. One day, after some hours passed in violent fluctuation of opinion, sleep insensibly seized him in his chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a desert country in search of some one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he stood on the top of a hill shaded with cypress, in doubt whether to direct his steps, his father appeared on a sudden standing before him. Ortogrul, said the old man, I know thy perplexity; listen to thy father; turn thine eye on the opposite mountain. Ortogrul looked, and saw a torrent tumbling down the rocks, roaring with the noise of thunder, and scattering its foam on the impending woods. Now, said his father, behold the valley that lies between the hills. Ortogrul looked, and espied a little well out of which issued a small rivulet. Tell me now, said his father, dost thou wish for sudden affluence, that may pour upon thee like the mountain torrent, or for a slow and gradual increase, resembling the rill gliding from the well? Let me be quickly rich, said Ortogrul; let the golden stream be quick and violent. Look round thee, said his father, once again. Ortogrul looked, and perceived the channel of the torrent dry and dusty; but following the rivulet from the well, he traced it to a wide lake, which the supply, slow and constant, kept always full. He waked and determined to grow rich by silent profit and persevering industry.

Having sold his patrimony, he engaged in merchandise, and in twenty years purchased lands, on which he raised a house, equal in sumptuousness to that of the vizier, to which he invited all the ministers of pleasure, expecting to enjoy all the felicity which he had imagined riches able to afford. Leisure soon made him weary of himself, and he longed to be persuaded that he was great and happy. He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him hopes of pleasing him, and all who should please him hopes of being rewarded. Every art of praise was tried, and every source of adulatory fiction was exhausted. Ortogrul heard his flatterers without delight, because he found himself unable to believe them. His own heart told him its frailties, his own understanding reproached him with his faults. How long, said he, with a deep sigh, have I been labouring in vain to amass wealth which at last is useless! Let no man hereafter wish to be rich, who is already too wise to be flattered.

No. 100.] Saturday, March 15, 1760.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

The uncertainty and defects of language have produced very frequent complaints among the learned; yet there still remain many words among us undefined, which are very necessary to be rightly understood, and which produce very mischievous mistakes when they are erroneously interpreted.

I lived in a state of celibacy beyond the usual time. In the hurry first of pleasure, and afterwards of business, I felt no want of a domestic companion; but becoming weary of labour, I soon grew more weary of idleness, and thought it reasonable to follow the custom of life, and to seek some solace of my cares in female tenderness, and some amusement of my leisure in female cheerfulness.

The choice which has been long delayed is commonly made at last with great caution. My resolution was, to keep my passions neutral, and to marry only in compliance with my reason. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a scheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border upon every virtue, and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I considered that wit was sarcastic, and magnanimity imperious; that avarice was economical, and ignorance obsequious; and having estimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence, and that of my friends, to find the lady in whom nature and reason had reached that happy mediocrity which is equally remote from exuberance and deficience.

Every woman had her admirers and her censurers; and the expectations which one raised were by another quickly depressed; yet there was one in whose favour almost all suffrages concurred. Miss Gentle was universally allowed to be a good sort of woman. Her fortune was not large, but so prudently managed, that she wore finer clothes, and saw more company, than many who were known to be twice as rich. Miss Gentle's visits were every where welcome; and whatever family she favoured with her company, she always left behind her such a degree of kindness as recommended her to others. Every day extended her acquaintance; and all who knew her declared that they never met with a better sort of woman.

To Miss Gentle I made my addresses, and was received with great equality of temper. She did not in the days of courtship assume the privilege of imposing rigorous commands, or resenting slight offences. If I forgot any of her injunctions, I was gently reminded; if I missed the minute of appointment, I was easily forgiven. I foresaw nothing in marriage but a halcyon calm, and longed for the happiness which was to be found in the inseparable society of a good sort of woman.

The jointure was soon settled by the intervention of friends, and the day came in which Miss Gentle was made mine for ever. The first month was passed easily enough in receiving and repaying the civilities of our friends. The bride practised with great exactness all the niceties of ceremony, and distributed her notice in the most punctilious proportions to the friends who surrounded us with their happy auguries.

But the time soon came when we were left to ourselves, and were to receive our pleasures from each other, and I then began to perceive that I was not formed to be much delighted by a good sort of woman. Her great principle is, that the orders of a family must not be broken. Every hour of the day has its employment inviolably appropriated; nor will any importunity persuade her to walk in the garden at the time which she has devoted to her needlework, or to sit up stairs in that part of the forenoon which she has accustomed herself to spend in the back parlour. She allows herself to sit half an hour after breakfast, and an hour after dinner; while I am talking or reading to her, she keeps her eye upon her watch, and when the minute of departure comes, will leave an argument unfinished, or the intrigue of a play unravelled. She once called me to supper when I was watching an eclipse, and summoned me at another time to bed when I was going to give directions at a fire.

Her conversation is so habitually cautious, that she never talks to me but in general terms, as to one whom it is dangerous to trust. For discriminations of character she has no names: all whom she mentions are honest men and agreeable women. She smiles not by sensation, but by practice. Her laughter is never excited but by a joke, and her notion of a joke is not very delicate. The repetition of a good joke does not weaken its effect; if she has laughed once, she will laugh again.

She is an enemy to nothing but ill-nature and pride; but she has frequent reason to lament that they are so frequent in the world. All who are not equally pleased with the good and the bad, with the elegant and gross, with the witty and the dull, all who distinguish excellence from defect, she considers as ill-natured; and she condemns as proud all who repress impertinence or quell presumption, or expect respect from any other eminence than that of fortune, to which she is always willing to pay homage.

There are none whom she openly hates, for if once she suffers, or believes herself to suffer, any contempt or insult, she never dismisses it from her mind, but takes all opportunities to tell how easily she can forgive. There are none whom she loves much better than others; for when any of her acquaintance decline in the opinion of the world, she always finds it inconvenient to visit them; her affection continues unaltered, but it is impossible to be intimate with the whole town.

She daily exercises her benevolence by pitying every misfortune that happens to every family within her circle of notice; she is in hourly terrors lest one should catch cold in the rain, and another be frighted by the high wind. Her charity she shows by lamenting that so many poor wretches should languish in the streets, and by wondering what the great can

think on that they do so little good with such large estates.

Her house is elegant and her table dainty, though she has little taste of eleganec, and is wholly free from vicious luxury; but she comforts herself that nobody can say that her house is dirty, or that her dishes are not well dressed.

This, Mr. Idler, I have found by long experience to be the character of a good sort of woman, which I have sent you for the information of those by whom a "good sort of a woman," and a "good woman," may happen to be used as equivalent terms, and who may suffer by the mistake, like

Your humble servant,

TIM WARNER.

No. 101.] SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1760.

OMAR, the son of Hassan, had passed seventy-five years in honour and prosperity. The favour of three successive califs had filled his house with gold and silver; and whenever he appeared, the benedictions of the people proclaimed his passage.

Terrestrial happiness is of short continuance. The brightness of the flame is wasting its fuel; the fragrant flower is passing away in its own odours. The vigour of Omar began to fail, the curls of beauty fell from his head, strength departed from his hands, and agility from his feet. He gave back to the calif the keys of trust, and the seals of secrecy; and sought no other pleasure for the remains of life than the converse of the wise, and the gratitude of the good.

The powers of his mind were yet unimpaired. His chamber was filled by visitants, eager to catch the dictates of experience, and officious to pay the tribute of admiration. Caled, the son of the viceroy of Egypt, entered every day early, and retired late. He was beautiful and eloquent; Omar admired his wit and loved his docility. Tell me, said Caled, thou to whose voice nations have listened, and whose wisdom is known to the extremities of Asia, tell me how I may resemble Omar the prudent. The arts by which you have gained power and preserved it, are to you no longer necessary or useful; impart to me the secret of your conduct, and teach me the plan upon which your wisdom has built your fortune.

Young man, said Omar, it is of little use to form plans of life. When I took my first survey of the world, in my twentieth year, having considered the various conditions of mankind, in the hour of solitude I said thus to myself, leaning against a cedar which spread its branches over my head:—Seventy years are allowed to man; I have yet fifty remaining: ten years I will allot to the attainment of knowledge, and ten I will pass in foreign countries; I shall be learned, and therefore shall be honoured; every city will shout at my arrival, and every student will solicit my friendship. Twenty years thus passed will store my mind with images which I shall be busy through the rest of my life in combining and comparing. I shall revel in inexhaustible accumulations of intellectual riches; I shall find new pleasures for every moment, and shall never more be weary of myself. I will, however, not deviate too far from the beaten track of life, but will try what can be found in female delicacy. I will marry a wife beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide; with her I will live twenty years within the suburbs of Bagdat, in every pleasure that wealth can purchase, and fancy can invent. I will then retire to a rural dwelling, pass my last days in obscurity and contemplation, and lie silently down on the bed of death. Through my life it shall be my settled resolution, that I will never depend upon the smile of princes; that I will never stand exposed to the artifices of courts; I will never pant for public honours, nor disturb my quiet with the affairs of state. Such was my scheme of life, which I impressed indelibly upon my memory.

The first part of my ensuing time was to be spent in search of knowledge; and I know not how I was diverted from my design. I had no visible impediments without, nor any ungovernable passions within. I regarded knowledge as the highest honour and the most engaging pleasure; yet day stole upon day, and month glided after month, till I found that seven years of the first ten had vanished, and left nothing behind them. I now postponed my purpose of travelling; for why should I go abroad while so much remained to be learned at home? I immured myself for four years, and studied the laws of the empire. The fame of my skill reached the judges; I was found able to speak upon doubtful questions, and was commanded to stand at the footstool of the calif. I was heard with attention, I was consulted with confidence, and the love of praise fastened on my heart.

I still wished to see distant countries, listened with rapture to the relations of travellers, and resolved some time to ask my dismission, that I might feast my soul with novelty; but my presence was always necessary, and the stream of business hurried me along. Sometimes I was afraid lest I should be charged with ingratitude; but I still proposed to travel, and therefore would not confine myself by marriage.

In my fiftieth year I began to suspect that the time of travelling was past, and thought it best to lay hold on the felicity yet in my power, and indulge myself in domestic pleasures. But at fifty no man easily finds a woman beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide. I inquired and rejected, consulted and deliberated, till the sixty-second year made me ashamed of gazing upon girls. I had now nothing left but retirement, and for retirement I never found a time, till disease forced me from public employment.

Such was my scheme, and such has been its consequence. With an insatiable thirst for knowledge, I trifled away the years of improvement; with a restless desire of seeing different countries, I have always resided in the same city; with the highest expectation of connubial

felicity, I have lived unmarried; and with unalterable resolutions of contemplative retirement, I am going to die within the walls of Bagdat.

No. 102.] Saturday, March 29, 1760.

It very seldom happens to man that his business is his pleasure. What is done from necessity is so often to be done when against the present inclination, and so often fills the mind with anxiety, that an habitual dislike steals upon us, and we shrink involuntarily from the remembrance of our task. This is the reason why almost every one wishes to quit his employment; he does not like another state, but is disgusted with his own.

From this unwillingness to perform more than is required of that which is commonly performed with reluctance, it proceeds that few authors write their own lives. Statesmen, courtiers, ladies, generals, and seamen, have given to the world their own stories, and the events with which their different stations have made them acquainted. They retired to the closet as to a place of quiet and amusement, and pleased themselves with writing, because they could lay down the pen whenever they were weary. But the author however conspicuous, or however important, either in the public eye or in his own, leaves his life to be related by his successors, for he cannot gratify his vanity but by sacrificing his ease.

It is commonly supposed, that the uniformity of a studious life affords no matter for narration: but the truth is, that of the most studious life a great part passes without study. An author partakes of the common condition of humanity; he is born and married like another man; he has hopes and fears, expectations and disappointments, griefs and joys, and friends and enemies, like a courtier or a statesman; nor can I conceive why his affairs should not excite curiosity as much as the whisper of a drawing-room, or the factions of a camp.

Nothing detains the reader's attention more powerfully than deep involutions of distress, or sudden vicissitudes of fortune; and these might be abundantly afforded by memoirs of the sons of literature. They are entangled by contracts which they know not how to fulfil, and obliged to write on subjects which they do not understand. Every publication is a new period of time, from which some increase or declension of fame is to be reckoned. The gradations of a hero's life are from battle to battle, and of an author's from book to book.

Success and miscarriage have the same effects in all conditions. The prosperous are feared, hated, and flattered; and the unfortunate avoided, pitied, and despised. No sooner is a book published than the writer may judge of the opinion of the world. If his acquaintance press round him in public places or salute him from the other side of the street; if invitations to dinner come thick upon him, and those with whom he dines keep him to supper; if the ladies turn to him when his coat is plain, and the footmen serve him with attention and alacrity; he may be sure that his work has been praised by some leader of literary fashions.

Of declining reputation the symptoms are not less easily observed. If the author enters a coffee-house, he has a box to himself; if he calls at a bookseller's, the boy turns his back; and, what is the most fatal of all prognostics, authors will visit him in a morning, and talk to him, hour after hour, of the malevolence of critics, the neglect of merit, the bad taste of the age, and the candour of posterity.

All this, modified and varied by accident and custom, would form very amusing scenes of biography, and might recreate many a mind which is very little delighted with conspiracies or battles, intrigues of a court, or debates of a parliament; to this might be added all the changes of the countenance of a patron, traced from the first glow which flattery raises in his cheek, through ardour of fondness, vehemence of promise, magnificence of praise, excuse of delay, and lamentation of inability, to the last chill look of final dismission, when the one grows weary of soliciting, and the other of hearing solicitation.

Thus copious are the materials which have been hitherto suffered to lie neglected, while the repositories of every family that has produced a soldier or a minister are ransacked, and libraries are crowded with useless folios of state papers which will never be read, and which contribute nothing to valuable knowledge.

I hope the learned will be taught to know their own strength and their value, and, instead of devoting their lives to the honour of those who seldom thank them for their labours, resolve at last to do justice to themselves.

No. 103.] Saturday, April 5, 1760.

Respicere ad longæ jussit spatia ultima vitæ.

JUV.

Much of the pain and pleasure of mankind arises from the conjectures which every one makes of the thoughts of others; we all enjoy praise which we do not hear, and resent contempt which we do not see. The Idler may therefore be forgiven, if he suffers his imagination to represent to him what his readers will say or think when they are informed that they have now his last paper in their hands.

Value is more frequently raised by scarcity than by use. That which lay neglected when it was common, rises in estimation as its quantity becomes less. We seldom learn the true want of what we have, till it is discovered that we can have no more.

This essay will, perhaps, be read with care even by those who have not yet attended to any other; and he that finds this late attention recompensed, will not forbear to wish that he had bestowed it sooner.

Though the Idler and his readers have contracted no close friendship, they are perhaps both unwilling to part. There are few things not purely evil, of which we can say, without some emotion of uncasiness, "this is the last." Those who never could agree together, shed tears when mutual discontent has determined them to final separation; of a place which has been frequently visited, though without pleasure, the last look is taken with heaviness of heart; and the Idler with all his chillness of tranquillity, is not wholly unaffected by the thought that his last essay is now before him.

This secret horror of the last is inseparable from a thinking being, whose life is limited, and to whom death is dreadful. We always make a secret comparison between a part and the whole: the termination of any period of life reminds us that life itself has likewise its termination; when we have done any thing for the last time, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is past, and that as more are past there are less remaining.

It is very happily and kindly provided, that in every life there are certain pauses and interruptions which force consideration upon the careless, and seriousness upon the light; points of time where one course of action ends, and another begins; and by vicissitudes of fortune, or alteration of employment, by change of place or loss of friendship, we are forced to say of something, "this is the last."

An even and unvaried tenour of life always hides from our apprehension the approach of its end. Succession is not perceived but by variation; he that lives to day as he lived yesterday, and expects that as the present day is, such will be the morrow, easily conceives time as running in a circle and returning to itself. The uncertainty of our duration is impressed commonly by dissimilitude of condition; it is only by finding life changeable that we are reminded of its shortness.

This conviction, however forcible at every new impression, is every moment fading from the mind; and partly by the inevitable incursion of new images, and partly by voluntary exclusion of unwelcome thoughts, we are again exposed to the universal fallacy; and we must do another thing for the last time, before we consider that the time is nigh when we shall do no more.

As the last Idler is published in that solemn week which the Christian world has always set apart for the examination of the conscience, the review of life, the extinction of earthly desires, and the renovation of holy purposes; I hope that my readers are already disposed to view every incident with seriousness, and improve it by meditation; and that when they see this series of trifles brought to a conclusion, they will consider that, by outliving the Idler, they have passed weeks, months, and years, which are now no longer in their power; that an end must in time be put to every thing great, as to every thing little; that to life must come its last hour, and to this system of being its last day, the hour at which probation ceases and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart, shall be brought to judgment, and an everlasting futurity shall be determined by the past.

No. XXII.*

Many naturalists are of opinion, that the animals which we commonly consider as mute, have the power of imparting their thoughts to one another. That they can express general sensations is very certain: every being that can utter sounds, has a different voice for pleasure and for pain. The hound informs his fellows when he scents his game; the hen calls her chickens to their food by her cluck, and drives them from danger by her scream.

Birds have the greatest variety of notes; they have indeed a variety, which seems almost sufficient to make a speech adequate to the purposes of a life which is regulated by instinct, and can admit little change or improvement. To the cries of birds curiosity or superstition has been always attentive; many have studied the language of the feathered tribes, and some have boasted that they understood it.

The most skilful or most confident interpreters of the sylvan dialogues, have been commonly found among the philosophers of the east, in a country where the calmness of the air, and the mildness of the seasons, allow the student to pass a great part of the year in groves and bowers. But what may be done in one place by peculiar opportunities, may be performed in another by peculiar diligence. A shepherd of Bohemia has, by long abode in the forests, enabled himself to understand the voice of birds; at least he relates with great confidence a story, of which the credibility is left to be considered by the learned.

As I was sitting (said he) within a hollow rock, and watching my sheep that fed in the valley, I heard two vultures interchangeably crying on the summit of a cliff. Both voices were earnest and deliberate. My curiosity prevailed over the care of the flock; I climbed slowly and silently from crag to crag, concealed among the shrubs, till I found a cavity where I might sit and listen without suffering or giving disturbance.

I soon perceived that my labour would be well repaid, for an old vulture was sitting on a naked prominence, with her young about her, whom she was instructing in the arts of a vulture's life, and preparing by the last lecture, for their final dismission to the mountains and the skies.

My children, said the old vulture, you will the less want my instructions, because you have had my practice before your eyes; you have seen me snatch from the farm the household fowl, you have seen me seize the leveret in the bush, and the kid in the pasturage; you know how to fix your talons, and how to balance your flight when you are laden with

* This was the original No. 22, but on the republication of the work in volumes, Dr. Johnson substituted what now stands under that head.

your prey. But you remember the taste of more delicious food. I have often regaled you with the flesh of man. Tell us, said the young vultures, where man may be found, and how he may be known: his flesh is surely the natural food of a vulture. Why have you never brought a man in your talons to the nest? He is too bulky, said the mother; when we find a man we can only tear away his flesh, and leave his bones upon the ground. Since man is so big, said the young ones, how do you kill him? You are afraid of the wolf and of the bear, by what power are vultures superior to man? Is man more defenceless than a sheep? We have not the strength of man, returned the mother, and I am sometimes in doubt whether we have the subtilty; and the vultures would seldom feast upon his flesh, had not nature, that devoted him to our uses, infused into him a strange ferocity, which I have never observed in any other being that feeds upon the earth. Two herds of men will often meet and shake the earth with noise, and fill the earth with fire. When you hear noise, and see fire, with flashes along the ground, hasten to the place with your swiftest wing, for men are surely destroying one another; you will then find the ground smoking with blood and covered with carcases, of which many are dismembered, and mangled for the convenience of the vulture. But when men have killed their prey, said the pupil, why do they not eat it? When the wolf has killed a sheep, he suffers not the vulture to touch it till he has satisfied himself. Is not man another kind of wolf? Man, said the mother, is the only beast who kills that which he does not devour, and this quality makes him so much a benefactor to our species. If men kill our prey, and lay it in our way, said the young one, what need shall we have of labouring for ourselves? Because man will sometimes, replied the mother, remain for a long time quiet in his den. The old vultures will tell you when you are to watch his motions. When you see men in great numbers moving close together, like a flight of storks, you may conclude that they are hunting, and that you will soon revel in human blood. But still, said the young one, I would gladly know the reason of this mutual slaughter. I could never kill what I could not eat. My child, said the mother, this is a question which I cannot answer, though I am reckoned the most subtile bird of the mountain. When I was young, I used frequently to visit the ayry of an old vulture, who dwelt upon the Carpathian rocks; he had made many observations; he knew the places that afforded prey round his habitation, as far in every direction as the strongest wing can fly between the rising and setting of the summer sun; he had fed year after year on the entrails of men. His opinion was, that men had only the appearance of animal life, being really vegetables, with a power of motion; and that as the boughs of an oak are dashed together by the storm, that swine may fatten upon the falling acorns, so men are by some unaccountable power driven one against another, till they lose their motion, that vultures may be fed. Others think they have observed something of contrivance and policy among these mischievous beings; and those that hover more closely round them, pretend, that there is in every herd, one that gives directions to the rest, and seems to be more eminently delighted with a wide carnage. What it is that entitles him to such pre-eminence we know not; he is seldom the biggest or the swiftest, but he shews by his eagerness and diligence that he is, more than any of the others, a friend to vultures.

RASSELAS.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the history of Rasselas prince of Abissinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the father of waters begins his course; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abissinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place, which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abissinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it had long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy, that no man, without the help of engines, could open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side rivulets descended, that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream, which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice, till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrubs, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns: the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together. The blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life; and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days, every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hopes that they should pass their lives in blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they to whom it was new always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those on whom the iron gate had once closed were never suffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new scenes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence, raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares, or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time; and the building stood from century to century, deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers, who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if Suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage; every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by subterraneous passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns

had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had reposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower, not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAPTER II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

Here the sons and daughters of Abissinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages who instructed them told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man. To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the happy valley. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment were the business of every hour, from the dawn of morning to the close of the evening.

These methods were generally successful: few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom nature had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves, all but Rasselas, who, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from the pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him: he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure: he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes. The singularity of his humour made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporal necessities with myself: he is hungry, and crops the grass; he is thirsty, and drinks the stream; his thirst and hunger are appeased; he is satisfied, and sleeps; he rises again and is hungry; he is again fed, and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty, like him, but when thirst and hunger cease, I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy: I long again to be hungry, that I may again quicken the attention. The birds peck the berries of the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the lutanist and the singer; but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover in me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense, for which this place affords no gratification; or he has some desires distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me, that walk thus among you, burdened with myself; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free; I fear pain when I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated: surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAPTER III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day, his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford. "Why," said he, "does this man thus intrude upon me? shall I never be suffered to forget these lectures, which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again, must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced, and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire why he so often retired

from the pleasures of the palace, to loneliness and silence. "I fly from pleasure," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others."—"You, sir," said the sage, "are the first who has complained of misery in the happy valley. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all the emperor of Abissinia can bestow; here is neither labour to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply: if you want nothing, how are you unhappy?"

"That I want nothing," said the prince, "or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint: if I had any known want, I should have a certain wish; that wish would excite endeavour, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountains, or to lament when the day breaks, and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy that I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much: give me something to desire." The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. "Sir," said he, "if you had seen the miseries of the world you would know how to value your present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire: I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

At this time the sound of music proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life, shame and grief are of short duration: whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long; or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or that we look with slight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be endured: he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done. This first beam of hope that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet, with distinctness, either end or means. He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could only enjoy by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all the schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures can never be so multiplied or continued as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened; he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought. His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen, to place himself in various conditions, to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures; but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle that he forgot his real solitude; and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts: but, resolving to weary by perseverance him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!" Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse, and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four-and-twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors, and the absurd institutions of my country; I remember it with disgust, yet without

remorse; but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored; I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: in this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies; the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth and the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind: he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it; having not known, or not considered, how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie opened before her. He, for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature, which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless researches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away; in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements, which beguiled his labour and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he proposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated: he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAPTER VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

Among the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulets that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were played at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic science can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains. Having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire farther before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beast the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and man by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly: to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to

swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied: I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent; and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls; but, as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man shall float in the air without any tendency to fall; no care will then be necessary but to move forward, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! to survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passages, pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other."

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired, but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains; yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall; therefore I suspect, that from any height, where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bats' wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow; and, in a year, expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them to fly. But what would be the security of the good if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, mountains, nor seas, could afford security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea!"

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince. In a year the wings were finished; and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water; and the prince drew him to land half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent, by degrees, preyed upon him; and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had ever been known: the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pasture, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements; and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then, entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by

what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and to hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Africa and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments and narrow comprehension; he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperor!"

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abissinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part and subjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand; but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration."

"My father," proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education than such as might qualify me for commerce; and discovering in me great strength of memory and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be some time the richest man in Abissinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right; but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he, whose real wants are supplied, must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school: but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purposes of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel; in which time I had been instructed, by successive masters, in all the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but, as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructors; because, when the lessons were ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce; and, opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. This, young man, said he, is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than a fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own, to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich; if in four years you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners: for he shall be always equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abissinia.

"I remembered that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise, which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty, which I was at liberty to incur; and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and, by drinking at the fountain of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

"As I was supposed to trade without connexion with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage. It was sufficient for me, that, wherever I wandered, I should see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"When I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me in pleasing terror, and thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze around for ever without satiety; but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end, like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities; it is inhabited by men of different customs, and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life, though I should miss it in nature.

"With this thought I quieted my mind; and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval amusements, when we safely landed at Surat. I secured my money, and, purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn, at the usual expense, the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince: "is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority; but your ignorance was merely accidental, which, being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning, as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate; it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies because they grieved to think me rich, and my oppressors because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince: "I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved; and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves; and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

"My credit was now so high, that the merchants with whom I had travelled applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

"They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not do for kindness I would not do for money, and refused them; not because they had injured me; but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

"Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

"From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation pastoral and warlike; who lived without any settled habitation, whose wealth is their flocks and herds, and who have carried on, through ages, an hereditary war with mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions."

CHAPTER X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

"Wherever I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to angelic nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best: whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent which it received by accident at first; or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art; that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was

ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors. I could never describe what I had not seen; I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

"Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw every thing with a new purpose; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified; no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace.—Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds.—To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination; he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety; for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study; and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived till now within the circuit of the mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before, or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades of the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations; and trace the changes of the human mind, as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age and country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same: he must, therefore, content himself with the slow progress of his name, contemn the praise of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations, as a being superior to time and place.

"His labour is not yet at an end; he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony."

CHAPTER XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

Imlac now felt the enthusiastic fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince "that I will at present hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe; the nations which are now in possession of all power and all knowledge; whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleets command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wish for any thing that may not be obtained: a thousand arts, of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful? or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiatics and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, sir, than we," answered Imlac, "because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When," said the prince with a sigh, "shall I be able to visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest men of every land must be continually resorting."

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine; for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my

life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions: it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered them, tell me the result."

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journeys in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine will, perhaps, find himself mistaken; yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonours at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced; it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines for the despatch of many laborious works, which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all public inconveniencies: they have roads cut through the mountains; and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy," said the prince, "who have all these conveniences, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, "are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is every where a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"I am not willing," said the prince, "to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can I believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentments: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would choose my friends among the wise, and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my care, be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received. What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia; in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abissinia. I hastened into Egypt, and, notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes: for in a city populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society, and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast, till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen, and the congratulations of my friends; and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions, the greater part were in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

"A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the

nobles of the kingdom: they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit because my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at last with solicitation and repulses, I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the happy valley should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favour, and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?" said Rasselas. "Tell me without reserve; art thou content with thy condition? or dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and, at the annual visit of the emperor, invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth: I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the accidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another: he that knows himself despised will always be envious: and still more envious and malevolent if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves, and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the happy valley. I have examined the mountain on every side, but find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison; thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the *choice of life*."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests, and boiling with whirlpools; you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince: "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes of the various conditions of men, and then to make deliberately my *choice of life*."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet, if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAPTER XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

The prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the happy valley might be endured with such a companion, and that, if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together, to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion; "knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanics laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line.

"It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the cony. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upward till we shall issue out beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this

proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in the morning to choose a place proper for their mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But on the fourth they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time: mark, however, how far we have advanced, and ye will find that our toil will some time have an end. Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest: if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen; it is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAPTER XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

They had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing at the mouth of the cavity. He started, and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since, then, not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed, that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, she should watch lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end: they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was now open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

The prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes toward every part, and seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey, of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set some milk and fruit before before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and ate the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journeys, being all unaccustomed to toil and difficulty, and knowing that, though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his compa-

nions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments. Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frighted, because those who came into her presence did not prostrate themselves. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac, having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the seacoast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez, and when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage; and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAPTER XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strangers, who have no other end of travel than curiosity; it will soon be observed that we are rich: our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you shall see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourselves at leisure to make your *choice of life.*

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise, and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the streets, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and for some time continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favourite, Pekuah, as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence, that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world, as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money; but the ladies could not, for a long time, comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as an equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince now being able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life.*

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him really happy. Wherever he went he met gayety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence: "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience: till one day, having sat a while silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends, I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court. I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gayety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly, where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air, and volatility of fancy, as might have suited beings of a higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions, inaccessible to care or sorrow: yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the *choice of life.*"

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which

cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestable reasons of preference, must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in the present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAYETY.

Rasselas rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted; but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images, their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonble being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest; the first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks, never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in mature age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are some time to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence one upon another, and, at last, drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intention kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter; he followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation, and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright, but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immoveable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience: concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power."

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being, and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known; who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines, and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to

admire, the teachers of morality: they discourse like angels, but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless: what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being, disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected."—"Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me?—of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away, convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sounds, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAPTER XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was still eager upon the same inquiry; and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and inquire whether that felicity, which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man, whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils, or enduring them.

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him; and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds' tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and, they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell the opinion of their own state: they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence towards those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous, and was in doubt whether life had any thing that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hands, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the shades were darkest; the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven, seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet, that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its streams sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone heaped together to increase its murmurs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who, he could be, that in those rude and unfrequented regions had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced they heard the sound of music, and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still farther, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill, surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart, he entreated their stay, and was the next day more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he should find here what he was seeking: but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my

wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected against him by the princess of the country: but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile; and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that she retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went to find the hermit.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

They came, on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees; at such a distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and paper, on the other mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniences for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him; and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended: we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life*."

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will most certainly remove from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment than led by devotion into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly; and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but, after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

Rasselas went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably

followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion, that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him a hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of the public were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself to review his life, and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely, that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and, perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world. "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will no longer be our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to inquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy, is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny; not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope or importunities of desire; he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocination. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us, therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live: throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp, do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, That deviation from nature, is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse: I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

Rasselas returned home full of reflections, doubting how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and farther inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto," said she, "known but little of the world; we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power; and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford the most opportunities of doing good: or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune: too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS

Rasselas applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition, whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since, by the law of subordination, this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man, only to fill

his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa were sent only to watch and report his conduct: every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power?" said Rasselas to his sister: "is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The Sultan that had advanced him was murdered by the Janizaries, and his successor had other views and different favourites.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

The princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families: for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful; but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother, to be much pleased with childish levity and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were imbittered by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with trifles like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient; every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow to discharge their secrets in her ear; and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the banks of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. "Answer," said she, "great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king: tell me if thou watcrest, through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint?"

"You are then," said Rasselas, "not more successful in private houses than I have been in courts." "I have, since the last partition of our provinces," said the princess, "enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest show of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw many poor whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances; it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravaganee. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest: they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants, than pleased with my readiness to succour them: and others, whose exigences compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

Nekayah, perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal: but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy: in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

"Parents and children seldom act in concert; each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents; and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children; thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in

spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

"Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression; the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candour: but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live on, to love less and less: and, if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation?"

"Surely," said the prince, "you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous: the good and the evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet less agree with one another: even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it; for he that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety by the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please, and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse; and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince, "I shall for the future think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met," said the princess, "with many who live single for that reason; but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements or vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude: it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we inquire the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAPTER XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

The conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, or enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance: whoever has many to please or to govern must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another; those that are not favoured will think themselves injured; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess, "which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet, he that sees inferior desert advanced above him will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist for ever in fixed and inexorable justice of distribution: he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites: he will permit some to please him who can never serve him: he will discover in those whom he loves qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that hath much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good, sometimes, by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces, to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influ-

ence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural, and almost all political evils, are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience, and a steady prospect of a happier state: this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

"Dear princess," said Rasselas, "you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by producing in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

"On necessary and inevitable evils which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen, they must be endured. But it is evident, that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestic evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies, or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward; the necessaries of life are required and obtained, and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

"Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform; each labouring for his own happiness, by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

"Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women were made to be the companions of each other; and, therefore, I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness."

"I know not," said the princess, "whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contest of disagreeing virtues where both are supported by consciousness of good intention, I am sometimes disposed to think, with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood, which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference: but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass and magnitude, and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder, that, judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other, as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we differ from each other, when we see only part of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politics and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies in his opinion."

"Let us not add," said the prince, "to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtleties of argument. We are employed in a search of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution; will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

"How the world is to be peopled," returned Nekayah, "is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourselves."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DEBATE ON MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

"The good of the whole," said Rasselas, "is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals; or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made

of the two states, it appears that the incommodities of a single life are, in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and avoidable. I cannot forbear to flatter myself that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children: the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

"Surely, all these evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures, life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities of inquiry and selection: one advantage at least will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children."

"What reason cannot collect," said Nekayah, "and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected; and I have often proposed it to those, whose accuracy of remark and comprehensiveness of knowledge made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined, that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other at a time when opinions are fixed and habits are established, when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

"It is scarcely possible, that two travelling through the world under the conduct of chance should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken; he that attempts to change the course of his own life very often labours in vain, and how shall we do that for others which we are seldom able to do for ourselves?"

"But surely," interposed the prince, "you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?"

"Thus it is," said Nekayah, "that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason can never decide; questions that eludc investigation, and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair, above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute details of a domestic day.

"Those who marry at an advanced age will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but in the diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without an equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners."

"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them; a time neither too early for the father nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That Nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Those conditions which flatter hope and attract desire are so constituted, that as we approach one we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both, but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration: he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn, while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can at the same time fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAPTER XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

Here Imlac entered, and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while

are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants; a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestic life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders, and from the wonders which time has spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

"My curiosity," said Rasselas, "does not very strongly lead me to survey piles of stone, or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

"The things that are now before us," said the princess, "require attention, and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times—with times which never can return, and heroes, whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows?"

"To know any thing," returned the poet, "we must know its effects; to see men, we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated, or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present, we must oppose it to the past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief, the past is the object; and the future, of hope and fear: even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

"The present state of things is the consequence of the former; and it is natural to inquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evils that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal: and he may properly be charged with evil who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

"There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates to the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful and elegant arts are not to be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern, have understandings to cultivate.

"Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

"When the eye, or the imagination, is struck with any uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects."

"I am willing," said the prince, "to see all that can deserve my search."—"And I," said the princess, "shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity."

"The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry," said Imlac, "are the pyramids: fabrics raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these the greatest is still standing, very little injured by time."

"Let us visit them to-morrow," said Nekayah: "I have often heard of the pyramids, and shall not rest till I have seen them, within and without, with my own eyes."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

The resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabric intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world: he showed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments, and having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage; when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in for ever." She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparitions," said the prince, "I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Im-

lac, "I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which, perhaps, prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth: those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason why spectres should haunt the pyramid more than other places, or why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them; how then can we offend them?"

"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abissinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die," returned the lady, "let her command some death less dreadful than inclosure in this horrid cavern. You know I dare not disobey you; I must go if you command me; but, if I once enter, I never shall come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof, and, embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was not yet satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the pyramids. "Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I must not learn cowardice; nor leave at last undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

Pekuah descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid; they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile, before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall, it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in the arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the inhabitants of peaceful commerce, as vultures descend upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness made the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the pyramids, no reason has ever been given, adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy, must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

"I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids, and confess thy folly!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

They rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered; and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected: the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in their tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the pyramid," said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us: we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight: but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away: the Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir," said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valour? the Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion, that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for, perhaps, they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo, repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness, which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend, who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer; and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them; nor indeed could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something, she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid; and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blameable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to Him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connexion of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault; but if we miscarry, the disappointment is irremediably imbittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him!

"Consider, princess, what would have been your condition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and, being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have borne the thought if you had forced her into the pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror."

"Had either happened," said Nekayah, "I could not have endured life till now; I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself."

"This, at least," said Imlac, "is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH, being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was, from that time, delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had sat an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women by whom she was attended knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great desire to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them; and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind,

though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah; till, not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence. I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome, alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gayety which life allows us? or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude, without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from earthly desires, I shall enter into that state, to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery; the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure is no very good reason for rejection of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust, has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow that what satisfaction this world can afford must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness: wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement."

"How far solitude may admit goodness, or advance it, I shall not," replied Imlac, "dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world when the image of your companion has left your thoughts." "That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed, as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled: yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux: something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye; and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion; commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees; you will meet in your way some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation."

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried: the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah; but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember; and, at last, wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was not yet diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She, therefore, solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that at least she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that of which the possession cannot be secured? I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to ex-

cellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

In seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac, being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relater, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district; and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Anthony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price, he restored her, with great respect, to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

"At what time, and in what manner I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupified than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger, they slackened their course; and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time, we stopped near a spring shaded with trees, in a pleasant meadow, where we sat upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

"When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted; but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moonlight to the side of the hill where the rest of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I ate it rather to encourage my maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself, therefore, to be undressed, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vest was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendour of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and, in a short time, came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and, taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. 'Illustrious lady,' said he, 'my fortune is better than I had presumed to hope; I am told, by my women, that I have a princess in my camp.'

Sir, answered I, your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger, who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever. 'Whoever, or whencesoever, you are,' returned the Arab, 'your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or more properly to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction; the lance that is lifted at guilt and power will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness.'

"How little, said I, did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me.

"'Misfortunes,' answered the Arab, 'should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate; I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life; I will fix your ransom, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality.'

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy; and finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less; for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness; and that any ransom which could be expected for a maid of common rank would be paid, but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then, smiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after, the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journeys. On the fourth day, the chief told me that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

"I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniencies for travel: my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

"The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked in his erratic expeditions such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented, and difficult of access; for when once a country declines from its primitive splendour, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries; and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite and cottages of porphyry."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

"We wandered about in this manner for some weeks, either, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is a uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which sooths the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way—bring money, and nothing is denied.

"At last we came to the dwelling of our chief; a strong and spacious house, built with stone in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. 'Lady,' said the Arab, 'you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security: here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.' He then led me into the inner apartments, and, seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground.

"His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but being soon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

"Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river horses are common in this unpeopled region; and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile; but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and

courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study; but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill, and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening: I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess; "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear for a few months that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room, as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt that the rest might be alarmed, or hid herself that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needlework, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing, for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot: of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no idea but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small that I could not listen without interrupting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab, whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab, such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority: when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life: as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude: he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time; such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense; for notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house, he made many incursions into the neighbouring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sincerity; and when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

"I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal; and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

"He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah, having heard her favourite's relation, rose and embraced her: and Rasselas gave her a hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAPTER XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

They returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none

of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice," answered Imlac, "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends once a month to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas and fluent conversation are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks: he smiled at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive; his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

"His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favourite studies are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance. For though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never, says he, bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded."

"Surely," said the princess, "this man is happy."

"I visited him," said Imlac, "with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation: he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

"Amidst this willingness to be pleased, and labour to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he was yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me."

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

"At last, the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat a while silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words: Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust; benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee.

"I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine.

"Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather, and the distribution of the seasons: the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction: the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command: I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator?"

CHAPTER XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

"I suppose he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt; for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:

"Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am probably the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it, I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance.

"How long, sir, said I, has this great office been in your hands?

"About ten years ago, said he, my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the

seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"One day as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination, I commanded rain to fall; and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips.

"Might not some other cause, said I, produce this concurrence? The Nile does not always rise on the same day.

"Do not believe, said he, with impatience, that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false.

"Why, sir, said I, do you call that incredible which you know, or think you know, to be true?

"Because, said he, I cannot prove it by any external evidence: and I know too well the laws of demonstration, to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I, therefore, shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short: the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me: the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself."

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

"Hear, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat? Hear me, therefore, with attention.

"I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes, in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.

"I promised that when I possessed the power I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand.—My heart, said he, will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet: I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun."

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practise his virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected, and the favourite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

"Disorder of intellect," answered Imlac, "happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity; but while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any depravation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardour of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

"In time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention: all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in weariness or leisure,

recurs constantly to the favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees, the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, sir, is one of the dangers of solitude; which the hermit has confessed not always promotes goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favourite, "imagine myself the queen of Abissinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies, and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have in my chamber heard the winds whistle, and the sheep bleat; sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastic delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to imagine the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour, of my solitude: and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," said Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes: when we first form them, we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAPTER XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

The evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw, at a small distance, an old man whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason: let us close the disquisitions of the night, by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled a while as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning like you pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions: it is enough that age can attain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty: I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider, that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave?"

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage, with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended: but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity; endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay, and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He arose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account; for age had never been considered as the season of felicity, and, if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that

the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy: that the noon of life might be bright, if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they could confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection; or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented: "For nothing," said she, "is more common than to call our own condition the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves; and remembered, that at the same age he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung upon their minds; and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

The princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans, who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared, that by this artifice, no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true: but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence, and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own, and, perhaps, the distrust which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside may stop the voice of counsel, and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her, either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will soon be weary of your company; men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art; and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress." "That," said Pekuah "must be my care: I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it; and by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity, and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities, he was timorous and bashful; but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy, he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy: Pekuah displayed what she knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left, at their departure, to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and, on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance, excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they

made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger: and, lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey, and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience: in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life: I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity; but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done: the day was spent in making observations, which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidently left alone for a few hours," said he, "my invetcrate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark, yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid, lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intrusted. If I favour myself in a known error, or am determined by my own ease in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure, as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt; fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain; but when melancholy notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which, when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which, from time to time, breaks in upon you: when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business, or to Pekuah; and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions."

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE PRINCE ENTERS AND BRINGS A NEW TOPIC.

"All this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought; but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrollable and overwhelming idea, that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered, with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day. "Such," said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abissinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and re-

minds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another; so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayah, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with mankind, who succours the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights, as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life; and, if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction, with a few associates serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish; and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasures," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that, of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him whether he could not delay her retreat, by showing her something which she had not seen before.

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found: but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the catacombs, or the ancient repositories, in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else is offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the catacombs. When they were about to descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead, I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return."—"No, I will not be left," answered Pekuah: "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

"What reason," said the prince, "can be given, why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcasses which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight as soon as decent rites can be performed?"

"The original of ancient customs," said Imlac, "is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased: and concerning superstitious ceremonies, it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends; and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general; had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

"The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed, amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say, that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, den-

sity, bulk, motion, and direction of motion. To which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly, one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification; but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of Omnipotence," replied the poet, "to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive any thing without extension: what is extended must have parts, and you allow that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk; yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause; as thought, such is the power that thinks, a power impassive and indiscerptible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He surely can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since, however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by Him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood a while silent, and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on for ever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy, like us, in the *choice of life*."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water, gave them no invitation to any excursions; and being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order: she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that, of all sublunary things, knowledge was the best. She desired first to learn all sciences, and then purposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed, they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated a while what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abissinia.

TALES OF IMAGINATION.

THE VISION OF THEODORE, THE HERMIT OF TENERIFFE,

FOUND IN HIS CELL.——1748.

FROM THE PRECEPTOR.

Son of Perseverance, whoever thou art, whose curiosity has led thee hither, read and be wise. He that now calls upon thee is Theodore, the Hermit of Teneriffe, who in the fifty-seventh year of his retreat, left this instruction to mankind, lest his solitary hours should be spent in vain.

I was once what thou art now, a groveller on the earth, and a gazer at the sky; I traffieked and heaped wealth together, I loved and was favoured, I wore the robe of honour, and heard the music of adulation: I was ambitious, and rose to greatness: I was unhappy, and retired. I sought for some time what I at length found here, a place where all real wants might be easily supplied, and where I might not be under the necessity of purchasing the assistance of men by the toleration of their follies. Here I saw fruits and herbs and water, and here determined to wait the hand of death, which I hope, when at last it comes, will fall lightly upon me.

Forty-eight years had I now passed in forgetfulness of all mortal cares, and without any inclination to wander farther than the necessity of procuring sustenance required; but as I stood one day beholding the rock that overhangs my cell, I found in myself a desire to climb it; and when I was on its top, was in the same manner determined to scale the next, till by degrees I conceived a wish to view the summit of the mountain, at the foot of which I had so long resided. This motion of my thoughts I endeavoured to suppress, not because it appeared criminal, but because it was new; and all change not evidently for the better, alarms a mind taught by experience to distrust itself. I was often afraid that my heart was deceiving me, that my impatience of confinement arose from some earthly passion, and that my ardour to survey the works of nature was only a hidden longing to mingle once again in the scenes of life. I therefore endeavoured to settle my thoughts into their former state, but found their distraction every day greater. I was always reproaching myself with the want of happiness within my reach, and at last began to question whether it was not laziness rather than caution that restrained me from climbing to the summit of Teneriffe.

I rose therefore before the day, and began my journey up the steep of the mountain; but I had not advanced far, old as I was and burdened with provisions, when the day began to shine upon me, the declivities grew more precipitous, and the sand slided from beneath my feet: at last, fainting with labour, I arrived at a small plain almost enclosed by rocks, and open only to the east. I sat down to rest awhile, in full persuasion that when I had recovered my strength I should proceed on my design; but when once I had tasted ease, I found many reasons against disturbing it. The branches spread a shade over my head, and the gales of spring wafted odours to my bosom.

As I sat thus, forming alternately excuses for delay, and resolutions to go forward, an irresistible heaviness suddenly surprised me; I laid my head upon the bank, and resigned myself to sleep: when methought I heard the sound as of the flight of eagles, and a being of more than human dignity stood before me. While I was deliberating how to address him, he took me by the hand with an air of kindness, and asked me solemnly, but without severity, "Theodore, whither art thou going?" "I am climbing," answered I, "to the top of the mountain, to enjoy a more extensive prospect of the works of nature." "Attend first," says he, "to the prospect which this place affords, and what thou dost not understand I will explain. I am one of the benevolent beings who watch over the children of the dust, to preserve them from those evils which will not ultimately terminate in good, and which they do not, by their own faults, bring upon themselves. Look round therefore without fear: observe, contemplate, and be instructed."

Encouraged by this assurance, I looked and beheld a mountain higher than Teneriffe, to the summit of which the human eye could never reach: when I had tired myself with gazing upon its height, I turned my eyes towards its foot, which I could easily discover, but was amazed to find it without foundation, and placed inconceivably in emptiness and darkness. Thus I stood terrified and confused; above were tracks inscrutable and below was total vacuity. But my preceptor, with a voice of admonition, cried out, "Theodore, be not affrighted, but raise thy eyes again; the Mountain of Existence is before thee, survey it and be wise."

I then looked with more deliberate attention, and observed the bottom of the mountain to be of gentle rise, and overspread with flowers; the middle to be more steep, embarrassed with crags, and interrupted by precipices, over which hung branches loaded with fruits, and among which were scattered palaces and bowers. The tracts which my eye could reach nearest the top were generally barren; but there were among the clefts of the rocks a few hardy evergreens, which though they did not give much pleasure to the sight or smell, yet seemed to cheer the labour and facilitate the steps of those who were clambering among them.

Then, beginning to examine more minutely the different parts, I observed at a great distance a multitude of both sexes issuing into view from the bottom of the mountain. Their first actions I could not accurately discern; but, as they every moment approached nearer, I found that they amused themselves with gathering flowers under the superintendence of a modest virgin in a white robe, who seemed not over solicitous to confine them to any settled pace or certain track: for she knew that the whole ground was smooth and solid, and that they could not easily be hurt or bewildered. When, as it often happened, they plucked a thistle for a flower, Innocence, so she was called, would smile at the mistake. Happy, said I, are they who are under so gentle a government, and yet are safe. But I had no opportunity to dwell long on the consideration of their felicity; for I found that Innocence continued her attendance but a little way, and seemed to consider only the flowery bottom of the mountain as her proper province. Those whom she abandoned scarcely knew that they were left, before they perceived themselves in the hands of Education, a nymph more severe in her aspect, and imperious in her commands, who confined them to certain paths, in their opinion too narrow and too rough. These they were continually solicited to leave by Appetite, whom Education could never fright away, though she sometimes awed her to such timidity, that the effects of her presence were scarcely perceptible. Some went back to the first part of the mountain, and seemed desirous of continuing busied in plucking flowers, but were no longer guarded by Innocence; and such as Education could not force back, proceeded up the mountain by some miry road, in which they were seldom seen, and scarcely ever regarded.

As Education led her troop up the mountain, nothing was more observable than that she was frequently giving them cautions to beware of Habits; and was calling out to one or another at every step, that a Habit was ensnaring them; that they would be under the dominion of Habit before they perceived their danger; and that those whom Habit should once subdue, had little hope of regaining their liberty.

Of this caution, so frequently repeated, I was very solicitous to know the reason, when my protector directed my regard to a troop of pigmies, which appeared to walk silently before those that were climbing the mountain, and each to smooth the way before her follower. I found that I had missed the notice of them before, both because they were so minute as not easily to be discerned, and because they grew every moment nearer in their colour to the objects with which they were surrounded. As the followers of Education did not appear to be sensible of the presence of these dangerous associates, or, ridiculing their diminutive size, did not think it possible that human beings should ever be brought into subjection by such feeble enemies, they generally heard her precepts of vigilance with wonder: and when they thought her eye withdrawn, treated them with contempt. Nor could I myself think her cautions so necessary as her frequent inculcations seemed to suppose, till I observed that each of these petty beings held secretly a chain in her hand, with which she prepared to bind those whom she found within her power. Yet these Habits, under the eye of Education, went quietly forward, and seemed very little to increase in bulk or strength; for though they were always willing to join with Appetite, yet when Education kept them apart from her, they would very punctually obey command, and make the narrow roads in which they were confined easier and smoother

It was observable, that their stature was never at a stand, but continually growing or decreasing, yet not always in the same proportions: nor could I forbear to express my admiration, when I saw in how much less time they generally gained than lost bulk. Though they grew slowly in the road of Education, it might however be perceived that they grew; but if they once deviated at the call of Appetite, their stature soon became gigantic; and their strength was such that Education pointed out to her tribe many that were led in chains by them, whom she could never more rescue from their slavery. She pointed them out, but with little effect; for all her pupils appeared confident of their own superiority to the strongest Habit, and some seemed in secret to regret that they were hindered from following the triumph of Appetite.

It was the peculiar artifice of Habit not to suffer her power to be felt at first. Those whom she led, she had the address of appearing only to attend, but was continually doubling her chains upon her companions; which were so slender in themselves, and so silently fastened, that while the attention was engaged by other objects, they were not easily perceived. Each link grew tighter as it had been longer worn; and when by continual additions they became so heavy as to be felt, they were very frequently too strong to be broken.

When Education had proceeded in this manner to the part of the mountain where the declivity began to grow craggy, she resigned her charge to two powers of superior aspect. The meaner of them appeared capable of presiding in senates, or governing nations, and yet watched the steps of the other with the most anxious attention, and was visibly confounded and perplexed if ever she suffered her regard to be drawn away. The other seemed to approve her submission as pleasing, but with such a condescension as plainly showed that she claimed it as due; and indeed so great was her dignity and sweetness, that he who would not reverence, must not behold her.

"Theodore," said my protector, "be fearless, and be wise; approach these powers, whose dominion extends to all the remaining part of the Mountain of Existence." I trembled, and ventured to address the inferior nymph, whose eyes, though piercing and awful, I was not able to sustain. "Bright Power," said I, "by whatever name it is lawful to address thee, tell me, thou who presidest here, on what condition thy protection will be granted?" "It will be granted," said she, "only to obedience. I am Reason, of all subordinate beings the noblest and the greatest; who, if thou wilt receive my laws, will reward thee like the rest of my votaries, by conducting thee to Religion." Charmed by her voice and aspect, I professed my readiness to follow her. She then presented me to her mistress, who looked upon me with tenderness. I bowed before her, and she smiled.

When Education delivered up those for whose happiness she had been so long solicitous, she seemed to expect that they should express some gratitude for her care, or some regret at the loss of that protection which she had hitherto afforded

them. But it was easy to discover, by the alacrity which broke out at her departure, that her presence had been long displeasing, and that she had been teaching those who felt in themselves no want of instruction. They all agreed in rejoicing that they should no longer be subject to her caprices, or disturbed by her documents, but should be now under the direction only of Reason, to whom they made no doubt of being able to recommend themselves by a steady adherence to all her precepts. Reason counselled them, at their first entrance upon her province, to enlist themselves among the votaries of Religion; and informed them, that if they trusted to her alone, they would find the same fate with her other admirers, whom she had not been able to secure against Appetites and Passions, and who, having been seized by Habits in the regions of Desire, had been dragged away to the caverns of Despair. Her admonition was vain; the greater number declared against any other direction, and doubted not but by her superintendency they should climb with safety up the Mountain of Existence. "My power," said Reason, "is to advise, not to compel; I have already told you the danger of your choice. The path seems now plain and even, but there are asperities and pitfalls, over which Religion only can conduct you. Look upwards, and you perceive a mist before you, settled upon the highest visible part of the mountain; a mist by which my prospect is terminated, and which is pierced only by the eyes of Religion. Beyond it are the temples of Happiness, in which those who climb the precipice by her direction, after the toil of their pilgrimage, repose for ever. I know not the way, and therefore can only conduct you to a better guide. Pride has sometimes reproached me with the narrowness of my view, but when she endeavoured to extend it, could only show me, below the mist, the bowers of Content; even they vanished as I fixed my eyes upon them; and those whom she persuaded to travel towards them were enchained by Habits, and ingulfed by Despair, a cruel tyrant, whose caverns are beyond the darkness on the right side and on the left, from whose prisons none can escape, and whom I cannot teach you to avoid."

Such was the declaration of Reason to those who demanded her protection. Some that recollected the dictates of Education, finding them now seconded by another authority, submitted with reluctance to the strict decree, and engaged themselves among the followers of Religion, who were distinguished by the uniformity of their march, though many of them were women, and by their continual endeavours to move upwards, without appearing to regard the prospects which at every step courted their attention.

All those who determined to follow either Reason or Religion, were continually importuned to forsake the road, sometimes by Passions, and sometimes by Appetites, of whom both had reason to boast the success of their artifices; for so many were drawn into by-paths, that any way was more populous than the right. The attacks of the Appetites were more impetuous, those of the Passions longer continued. The Appetites turned their followers directly from the true way; but the Passions marched at first in a path nearly in the same direction with that of Reason and Religion, but deviated by slow degrees, till at last they entirely changed their course. Appetite drew aside the dull, and Passion the sprightly. Of the Appetites, Lust was the strongest; and of the Passions, Vanity. The most powerful assault was to be feared, when a Passion and an Appetite joined their enticements; and the path of Reason was best followed, when a Passion called to one side, and an Appetite to the other.

These seducers had the greatest success upon the followers of Reason, over whom they scarcely ever failed to prevail, except when they counteracted one another. They had not the same triumphs over the votaries of Religion; for though they were often led aside for a time, Religion commonly recalled them by her emissary Conscience, before Habit had time to enchain them. But they that professed to obey Reason, if once they forsook her, seldom returned; for she had no messenger to summon them but Pride, who generally betrayed her confidence, and employed all her skill to support Passion; and if ever she did her duty, was found unable to prevail, if Habit had interposed.

I soon found that the great danger to the followers of Religion was only from Habit; every other power was easily resisted, nor did they find any difficulty, when they inadvertently quitted her, to find her again by the direction of Conscience, unless they had given time to Habit to draw her chain behind them, and bar up the way by which they had wandered. Of some of those the condition was justly to be pitied, who turned at every call of Conscience, and tried, but without effect, to burst the chains of Habit; saw Religion walking forwards at a distance, saw her with reverence, and longed to join her; but were, whenever they approached her, withheld by Habit, and languished in sordid bondage, which they could not escape, though they scorned and hated it.

It was evident that the Habits were so far from growing weaker by these repeated contests, that if they were not totally overcome, every struggle enlarged their bulk and increased their strength; and a Habit opposed and victorious was more than twice as strong as before the contest. The manner in which those who were weary of their tyranny endeavoured to escape from them, appeared by the event to be generally wrong; they tried to loose their chains one by one, and to retreat by the same degrees as they advanced; but before the deliverance was completed, Habit always threw new chains upon her fugitive; nor did any escape her but those who, by an effort sudden and violent, burst their shackles at once and left her at a distance; and even of these many rushing too precipitately forward, and hindered by their terrors from stopping where they were safe, were fatigued with their own vehemence, and resigned themselves again to that power from whom an escape must be so dearly bought, and whose tyranny was little felt, except when it was resisted.

Some however there always were, who when they found Habit prevailing over them, called upon Reason or Religion for assistance; each of them willingly came to the succour of her suppliant, but neither with the same strength nor the same success. Habit, insolent with her power, would often presume to parley with Reason, and offer to loose some of her chains if the rest might remain. To this Reason, who was never certain of victory, frequently consented, but always found her concession destructive, and saw

the captive led away by Habit to his former slavery. Religion never submitted to treaty, but held out her hand with certainty of conquest; and if the captive to whom she gave it did not quit his hold, always led him away in triumph, and placed him in the direct path to the Temple of Happiness, where Reason never failed to congratulate his deliverance, and encourage his adherence to that power to whose timely succour he was indebted for it.

When the traveller was again placed in the road of Happiness, I saw Habit again gliding before him, but reduced to the stature of a dwarf, without strength and without activity; but when the Passions or Appetites, which had before seduced him, made their approach, Habit would on a sudden start into size, and with unexpected violence push him towards them. The wretch, thus impelled on one side, and allured on the other, too frequently quitted the road of Happiness, to which after his second deviation from it, he rarely returned: but by a timely call upon Religion, the force of Habit was eluded, her attacks grew fainter, and at last her correspondence with the enemy was entirely destroyed. She then began to employ those restless faculties in compliance with the power which she could not overcome; and as she grew again in stature and in strength, cleared away the asperities of the road to Happiness.

From this road I could not easily withdraw my attention, because all who travelled it appeared cheerful and satisfied; and the farther they proceeded, the greater appeared their alacrity, and the stronger their conviction of the wisdom of their guide. Some, who had never deviated but by short excursions, had Habit in the middle of their passage vigorously supporting them, and driving off their Appetites and Passions which attempted to interrupt their progress. Others, who had entered this road late, or had long forsaken it, were toiling on without her help at least, and commonly against her endeavours. But I observed, when they approached to the barren top, that few were able to proceed without some support from Habit: and that they whose Habits were strong, advanced towards the mists with little emotion, and entered them at last with calmness and confidence; after which, they were seen only by the eye of Religion: and though Reason looked after them with the most earnest curiosity, she could only obtain a faint glimpse, when her mistress to enlarge her prospect raised her from the ground. Reason, however, discerned that they were safe, but Religion saw that they were happy.

"Now, Theodore," said my protector, "withdraw thy view from the regions of obscurity, and see the fate of those who, when they were dismissed by Education, would admit no direction but that of Reason. Survey their wanderings, and be wise."

I looked then upon the Road of Reason, which was indeed, so far as it reached, the same with that of Religion, nor had reason discovered it but by her instruction. Yet when she had once been taught it, she clearly saw that it was right; and Pride had sometimes incited her to declare that she discovered it herself, and persuaded her to offer herself as a guide to Religion: whom after many vain experiments she found it her highest privilege to follow. Reason was however at last well instructed in part of the way, and appeared to teach it with some success when her precepts were not misrepresented by Passion, or her influence overborne by Appetite. But neither of these enemies was she able to resist. When Passion seized upon her votaries, she seldom attempted opposition; she seemed indeed to contend with more vigour against Appetite, but was generally over-wearied in the contest; and if either of her opponents had confederated with Habit, her authority was wholly at an end. When Habit endeavoured to captivate the votaries of Religion, she grew by slow degrees, and gave time to escape; but in seizing the unhappy followers of Reason, she proceeded as one that had nothing to fear, and enlarged her size, and doubled her chains without intermission, and without reserve.

Of those who forsook the directions of Reason, some were led aside by the whispers of Ambition, who was perpetually pointing to stately palaces, situated on eminences on either side, recounting the delights of affluence, and boasting the security of power. They were easily persuaded to follow her, and Habit quickly threw her chains upon them; they were soon convinced of the folly of their choice, but few of them attempted to return. Ambition led them forward from precipice to precipice, where many fell, and were seen no more. Those that escaped were, after a long series of hazards, generally delivered over to Avarice, and enlisted by her in the service of Tyranny, where they continued to heap up gold till their patrons or their heirs pushed them headlong at last into the cavern of Despair.

Others were enticed by Intemperance to ramble in search of those fruits that hung over the rocks, and filled the air with their fragrance. I observed, that the Habits which hovered about these soon grew to an enormous size, nor were there any who less attempted to return to Reason, or sooner sunk into the gulfs that lay before them. When these first quitted the road, Reason looked after them with a frown of contempt, but had little expectations of being able to reclaim them; for the bowl of intoxication was of such qualities as to make them lose all regard but for the present moment; neither Hope nor Fear could enter their retreats: and Habit had so absolute a power, that even Conscience, if Religion had employed her in their favour, would not have been able to force an entrance.

There were others whose crime it was rather to neglect Reason than to disobey her: and who retreated from the heat and tumult of the way, not to the bowers of Intemperance, but to the maze of Indolence. They had this peculiarity in their condition, that they were always in sight of the Road of Reason, always wishing for her presence, and always resolving to return to-morrow. In these was most eminently conspicuous the subtlety of Habit, who hung imperceptible shackles upon them, and was every moment leading them farther from the road, which they always imagined that they had the power of reaching. They wandered on from one double of the labyrinth to another, with the chains of Habit hanging secretly upon them, till, as they advanced, the flowers grew paler, and the scents fainter; they proceeded in their dreary march without pleasure in their progress, yet without power to return; and had this aggravation above all others, that they were criminal but not delighted. The drunkard for a time laughed over his wine; the ambitious man triumphed in the miscarriage of his rival; but the

captives of Indolence had neither superiority nor merriment. Discontent lowered in their looks, and Sadness hovered round their shades; yet they crawled on reluctant and gloomy, till they arrived at the depth of the recess, varied only with poppies and nightshade, where the dominion of Indolence terminates, and the hopeless wanderer is delivered up to Melancholy; the chains of Habit are riveted for ever, and Melancholy, having tortured her prisoner for a time, consigns him at last to the cruelty of Despair.

While I was musing on this miserable scene, my protector called out to me, "Remember, Theodore, and be wise, and let not Habit prevail against thee." I started, and beheld myself surrounded by the rocks of Teneriffe: the birds of light were singing in the trees, and the glances of the morning darted upon me.

THE FOUNTAINS:

A FAIRY TALE.*

Felix qui potuit boni
Fontem visere lucidum. *Boethius.*

As Floretta was wandering in a meadow at the foot of Plinlimmon, she heard a little bird cry in such a note as she had never observed before, and looking round her, saw a lovely goldfinch entangled by a lime-twig, and a hawk hovering over him, as at the point of seizing him in his talons.

Floretta longed to rescue the little bird, but was afraid to encounter the hawk, who looked fiercely upon her without any apparent dread of her approach, and as she advanced seemed to increase in bulk, and clapped his wings in token of defiance. Floretta stood deliberating a few moments, but, seeing her mother at no great distance, took courage, and snatched the twig with the little bird upon it. When she had disengaged him, she put him in her bosom, and the hawk flew away.

Floretta, showing her bird to her mother, told her from what danger she had rescued him: her mother, after admiring its beauty, said, that he would be a very proper inhabitant of the little gilded cage, which had hung empty since the starling died for want of water, and that he should be placed at the chamber window, for it would be wonderfully pleasant to hear him in the morning.

Floretta, with tears in her eyes, replied, that he had better have been devoured by the hawk than die for want of water, and that she would not save him from a less evil to put him in danger of a greater: she therefore took him into her hand, cleaned his feathers from the bird-lime, looked upon him with great tenderness, and, having put his bill to her lips, dismissed him into the air.

He flew in circles round her as she went home, and, perching on a tree before the door, delighted them a while with such sweetness of song, that her mother reproved her for not putting him in the cage. Floretta endeavoured to look grave, but silently approved her own act, and wished her mother more generosity. Her mother guessed her thoughts, and told her, that when she was older she would be wiser.

Floretta, however, did not repent, but hoped to hear her little bird the next morning singing at liberty. She awaked early and listened, but no goldfinch could she hear. She rose, and walking again in the same meadow, went to view the bush where she had seen the lime-twig the day before.

When she entered the thicket, and was near the place for which she was looking, from behind a blossoming hawthorn advanced a female form of very low stature, but of elegant proportion and majestic air, arrayed in all the colours of the meadow, and sparkling as she moved like a dew-drop in the sun.

Floretta was too much disordered to speak or fly, and stood motionless between fear and pleasure, when the little lady took her by the hand.

"I am," says she, "one of that order of beings which some call Fairies, and some Piskies: we have always been known to inhabit the crags and caverns of Plinlimmon. The maids and shepherds when they wander by moonlight, have often heard our music, and sometimes seen our dances.

"I am the chief of the fairies of this region, and am known among them by the name of Lady Lilinet of the Blue Rock. As I lived always in my own mountain, I had very little knowledge of human manners, and thought better of mankind than other fairies found them to deserve; I therefore often opposed the mischievous practices of my sisters, without always inquiring whether they were just. I extinguished the light that was kindled to lead a traveller into a marsh, and found afterwards that he was hastening to corrupt a virgin; I dissipated a mist which assumed the form of a town, and was raised to decoy a monopolizer of corn from his way to the next market; I removed a thorn artfully planted to prick the foot of a churl that was going to hinder the poor from following his reapers; and defeated so many schemes of obstruction and punishment, that I was cited before the queen as one who favoured wickedness, and opposed the execution of fairy justice.

"Having never been accustomed to suffer control, and thinking myself disgraced by the necessity of defence, I so much irritated the Queen by my sullenness and petulance, that in her anger she transformed me into a goldfinch. 'In this form,' says she, 'I doom thee to remain till some human being shall show thee kindness without any prospect of interest.'

"I flew out of her presence not much dejected; for I did not doubt but every reasonable being must love that which, having never offended, could not be hated, and having no power to hurt, could not be feared.

"I therefore fluttered about the villages, and endeavoured to force myself into notice.

"Having heard that nature was least corrupted among those who had no acquaintance with elegance and splendour, I employed myself for five years in hopping before the doors of cottages, and often sat singing on the thatched roof: my motions were seldom seen, or my notes heard; no kindness was ever exciled, and all the reward of my officiousness was to be aimed at with a stone when I stood within a throw.

"The stones never hurt me for I had still the power of a fairy.

"I then betook myself to spacious and magnificent habitations, and sung in bowers by the walks or on the banks of fountains.

"In these places, where novelty was recom-

* From Miscellanies in Prose and Verse. By Anna Williams. 1766, 8vo

mended by satiety, and curiosity excited by leisure, my form and my voice were soon distinguished, and I was known by the name of the pretty goldfinch; the inhabitants would walk out to listen to my music, and at last it was their practice to court my visits by scattering meat in my common haunts.

"This was repeated till I went about pecking in full security, and expected to regain my original form, when I observed two of my most liberal benefactors silently advancing with a net behind me. I flew off, and fluttering beside them pricked the leg of each, and left them halting and groaning with the cramp.

"I then went to another house, where for two springs and summers I entertained a splendid family with such melody as they had never heard in the woods before. The winter that followed the second summer was remarkably cold, and many little birds perished in the field. I laid myself in the way of one of the ladies as benumbed with cold and faint with hunger; she picked me up with great joy, telling her companions that she had found the goldfinch that sung so finely all summer in the myrtle hedge, that she would lay him where he should die, for she could not bear to kill him, and would then pick his fine feathers very carefully, and stick them in her muff.

"Finding that her fondness and her gratitude could give way to so slight an interest, I chilled her fingers that she could not hold me, then flew at her face, and with my beak gave her nose four pecks that left four black spots indelible behind them, and broke a match by which she would have obtained the finest equipage in the county.

"At length the queen repented of her sentence, and being unable to revoke it, assisted me to try experiments upon man, to excite his tenderness, and attract his regard.

"We made many attempts, in which we were always disappointed. At last she placed me in your way held by a lime-twig, and herself in the shape of a hawk, made the show of devouring me. You, my dear, have rescued me from the seeming danger, without desiring to detain me in captivity, or seeking any other recompense than the pleasure of benefiting a feeling creature.

"The queen is so much pleased with your kindness, that I am come, by her permission, to reward you with a greater favour, than ever fairy bestowed before.

"The former gifts of fairies, though bounties in design, have proved commonly mischiefs in the event. We have granted mortals to wish according to their own discretion, and their discretion being small, and their wishes irreversible, they have rashly petitioned for their own destruction. But you, my dearest Floretta, shall have, what none have ever before obtained from us, the power of indulging your wish and the liberty of retracting it. Be bold, and follow me."

Floretta was easily persuaded to accompany the fairy, who led her through a labyrinth of crags and shrubs, to a cavern covered by a thicket on the side of the mountain.

"This cavern," said she, "is the court of Lilinet, your friend; in this place you shall find a certain remedy for all real evils." Lilinet then went before her through a long subterraneous passage, where she saw many beautiful fairies, who came to gaze at the stranger, but who, from reverence to their mistress, gave her no disturbance. She heard from remote corners of the gloomy cavern, the roar of winds and the fall of waters, and more than once entreated to return; but Lilinet, assuring her that she was safe, persuaded her to proceed, till they came to an arch, into which the light found its way through a fissure of the rock.

There Lilinet seated herself and her guest upon a bench of agate, and pointing to two fountains that bubbled before them, said, "Now attend, my dear Floretta, and enjoy the gratitude of a fairy. Observe the two fountains that spring up in the middle of the vault, one into a bason of alabaster, and the other into a bason of dark flint. The one is called the Spring of Joy, the other of Sorrow; they rise from distant veins in the rock, and burst out in two places, but after a short course unite their streams, and run ever after in one mingled current.

"By drinking of these fountains, which, though shut up from all other human beings, shall be always accessible to you, it will be in your power to regulate your future life.

"When you are drinking the water of joy from the alabaster fountain, you may form your wish, and it shall be granted. As you raise your wish higher, the water will be sweeter and sweeter to the taste; but beware that you are not tempted by its increasing sweetness to repeat your draughts, for the ill effects of your wish can only be removed by drinking of the spring of sorrow from the bason of flint, which will be bitter in the same proportion as the water of joy was sweet. Now, my Floretta, make the experiment, and give me the first proof of moderate desires. Take the golden cup that stands on the margin of the spring of joy, form your wish, and drink."

Floretta wanted no time to deliberate on the subject of her wish; her first desire was the increase of her beauty. She had some disproportion of features. She took the cup, and wished to be agreeable; the water was sweet, and she drank copiously; and in the fountain, which was clearer than crystal, she saw that her face was completely regular.

She then filled the cup again, and wished for a rosy bloom upon her cheeks: the water was sweeter than before, and the colour of her cheeks was heightened.

She next wished for a sparkling eye: the water grew yet more pleasant, and her glances were like the beams of the sun.

She could not yet stop; she drank again, desired to be made a perfect beauty, and a perfect beauty she became.

She had now whatever her heart could wish; and making an humble reverence to Lilinet, requested to be restored to her own habitation. They went back, and the fairies in the way wondered at the change of Floretta's form. She came home delighted to her mother, who, on seeing the improvement, was yet more delighted than herself.

Her mother from that time pushed her forward into public view: Floretta was at all the resorts of idleness and assemblies of pleasure; she was fatigued with balls, she was cloyed with treats, she was exhausted by the necessity of returning compliments. This life delighted her a while, but custom soon destroyed its pleasure. She found that the men who courted her to-day, resigned her on the morrow to other flatterers, and that the women attacked her reputation by whispers

and calumnies, till, without knowing how she had offended, she was shunned as infamous.

She knew that her reputation was destroyed by the envy of her beauty, and resolved to degrade herself from the dangerous pre-eminence. She went to the bush where she rescued the bird, and called for Lady Lilinet. Immediately Lilinet appeared, and discovered by Floretta's dejected look that she had drank too much from the alabaster fountain.

"Follow me," she cried, "my Floretta, and be wiser for the future."

They went to the fountains, and Floretta began to taste the waters of sorrow, which were so bitter that she withdrew more than once the cup from her mouth: at last she resolutely drank away the perfection of beauty, the sparkling eye and rosy bloom, and left herself only agreeable.

She lived for some time with great content; but content is seldom lasting. She had a desire in a short time again to taste the waters of joy; she called for the conduct of Lilinet, and was led to the alabaster fountain, where she drank, and wished for a faithful lover.

After her return she was soon addressed by a young man, whom she thought worthy of her affection. He courted, and flattered, and promised; till at last she yielded up her heart. He then applied to her parents; and, finding her fortune less than he expected, contrived a quarrel, and deserted her.

Exasperated by her disappointment, she went in quest of Lilinet, and expostulated with her for the deceit which she had practised. Lilinet asked her with a smile, for what she had been wishing; and being told, made her this reply, "You are not, my dear, to wonder or complain: you may wish for yourself, but your wishes can have no effect upon another. You may become lovely by the efficacy of the fountain, but that you shall be loved is by no means a certain consequence; for you cannot confer upon another either discernment or fidelity; that happiness which you must derive from others, it is not in my power to regulate or bestow."

Floretta was for some time so dejected by this limitation of the fountain's power, that she thought it unworthy of another visit; but, being on some occasion thwarted by her mother's authority, she went to Lilinet, and drank at the alabaster fountain for a spirit to do her own way.

Lilinet saw that she drank immoderately, and admonished her of her danger; but *spirit* and *her own way* gave such sweetness to the water, that she could not prevail upon herself to forbear, till Lilinet, in pure compassion, snatched the cup out of her hand.

When she came home every thought was contempt, and every action was rebellion: she had drunk into herself a spirit to resist, but could not give her mother a disposition to yield; the old lady asserted her right to govern; and, though she was often foiled by the impetuosity of her daughter, she supplied by pertinacity what she wanted in violence: so that the house was in continual tumult by the pranks of the daughter and opposition of the mother.

In time, Floretta was convinced that spirit had only made her a capricious termagant, and that her own ways ended in error, perplexity, and disgrace; she perceived that the vehemence of mind, which to a man may sometimes procure awe and obedience, produce to a woman nothing but detestation; she therefore went back, and by a large draught from the flinty fountain, though the water was very bitter, replaced herself under her mother's care, and quitted her spirit, and her own way.

Floretta's fortune was moderate, and her desires were not larger, till her mother took her to spend a summer at one of the places which wealth and idleness frequent, under pretence of drinking the waters. She was now no longer a perfect beauty, and therefore conversation in her presence took its course as in other company, opinions were freely told and observations made without reserve. Here Floretta first learned the importance of money. When she saw a woman of mean air and empty talk draw the attention of the place, she always discovered upon inquiry that she had so many thousands to her fortune.

She soon perceived that where these golden goddesses appeared, neither birth, nor elegance, nor civility, had any power of attraction, and every art of entertainment was devoted to them, and that the great and the wise courted their regard.

The desire after wealth was raised yet higher by her mother, who was always telling her how much neglect she suffered for want of fortune, and what distinctions, if she had but a fortune, her good qualities would obtain. Her narrative of the day was always, that Floretta walked in the morning, but was not spoken to because she had a small fortune, and that Floretta danced at the ball better than any of them, but nobody minded her for want of a fortune.

This want, in which all other wants appeared to be included, Floretta was resolved to endure no longer, and came home flattering her imagination in secret with the riches which she was now about to obtain.

On the day after her return she walked out alone to meet Lady Lilinet, and went with her to the fountain: riches did not taste so sweet as either beauty or spirit, and therefore she was not immoderate in her draught.

When they returned from the cavern, Lilinet gave her wand to a fairy that attended her, with an order to conduct Floretta to the Black Rock.

The way was not long, and they soon came to the mouth of a mine in which there was a hidden treasure, guarded by an earthly fairy deformed and shaggy, who opposed the entrance of Floretta till he recognised the wand of the lady of the Mountain. Here Floretta saw vast heaps of gold and silver and gems, gathered and reposited in former ages, and intrusted to the guard of the fairies of the earth. The little fairy delivered the orders of her mistress, and the surly sentinel promised to obey them.

Floretta, wearied with her walk, and pleased with her success, went home to rest, and when she waked in the morning, first opened her eyes upon a cabinet of jewels, and looking into her drawers and boxes, found them filled with gold.

Floretta was now as fine as the finest. She was the first to adopt any expensive fashion, to subscribe to any pompous entertainment, to encourage any foreign artist, or engage in any frolic of which the cost was to make the pleasure.

She was on a sudden the favourite of every place. Report made her wealth thrice greater than it really was, and wherever she came, all was attention, reverence, and obedience. The

ladies who had formerly slighted her, or by whom she had been formerly caressed, gratified her pride by open flattery and private murmurs. She sometimes overheard them railing at upstarts, and wondering whence some people came, or how their expenses were supplied. This incited her to heighten the splendour of her dress, to increase the number of her retinue, and to make such propositions of costly schemes, that her rivals were forced to desist from contest.

But she now began to find that the tricks which can be played with money will seldom bear to be repeated, that admiration is a short-lived passion, and that the pleasure of expense is gone when wonder and envy are no more excited. She found that respect was an empty form, and that all those who crowded round her were drawn to her by vanity or interest.

It was, however, pleasant to be able on any terms to elevate and to mortify, to raise hopes and fears: and she would still have continued to be rich, had not the ambition of her mother contrived to marry her to a lord, whom she despised as ignorant, and abhorred as profligate. Her mother persisted in her importunity; and Floretta having now lost the spirit of resistance, had no other refuge than to divest herself of her fairy fortune.

She implored the assistance of Lilinet, who praised her resolution. She drank cheerfully from the flinty fountain, and found the waters not extremely bitter. When she returned she went to bed, and in the morning perceived that all her riches had been conveyed away she knew not how, except a few ornamental jewels, which Lilinet had ordered to be carried back as a reward for her dignity of mind.

She was now almost weary of visiting the fountain, and solaced herself with such amusements as every day happened to produce: at last there arose in her imagination a strong desire to become a Wit.

The pleasures with which this new character appeared to teem were so numerous and so great, that she was impatient to enjoy them, and, rising before the sun, hastened to the place where she knew that her fairy patroness was always to be found. Lilinet was willing to conduct her, but could now scarcely restrain her from leading the way but by telling her, that, if she went first, the fairies of the cavern would refuse her passage.

They came in time to the fountain, and Floretta took the golden cup into her hand; she filled it and drank, and again she filled it, for wit was sweeter than riches, spirit, or beauty.

As she returned she felt new successions of imagery rise in her mind, and whatever her memory offered to her imagination, assumed a new form, and connected itself with things to which it seemed before to have no relation. All the appearances about her were changed, but the novelties exhibited were commonly defects. She now saw that almost every thing was wrong, without often seeing how it could be better; and frequently imputed to the imperfection of art those failures which were caused by the limitation of nature.

Wherever she went, she breathed nothing but censure and reformation. If she visited her friends, she quarrelled with the situation of their houses, the disposition of their gardens, the direction of their walks, and the termination of their views. It was vain to show her fine furniture, for she was always ready to tell how it might be finer, or to conduct her through spacious apartments, for her thoughts were full of nobler fabrics of airy palaces, and Hesperian gardens. She admired nothing, and praised but little.

Her conversation was generally thought uncivil. If she received flatteries, she seldom repaid them; for she set no value upon vulgar praise. She could not hear a long story without hurrying the speaker on to the conclusion; and obstructed the mirth of her companions, for she rarely took notice of a good jest, and never laughed except when she was delighted.

This behaviour made her unwelcome wherever she went; nor did her speculation upon human manners much contribute to forward her reception. She now saw the disproportions between language and sentiment, between passion and exclamation; she discovered the defects of every action, and the uncertainty of every conclusion; she knew the malignity of friendship, the avarice of liberality, the anxiety of content, and the cowardice of temerity.

To see all this was pleasant, but the greatest of all pleasures was to show it. To laugh was something, but it was much more to make others laugh. As every deformity of character made a strong impression upon her, she could not always forbear to transmit it to others: as she hated false appearances, she thought it her duty to detect them, till between wantonness and virtue, scarce any that she knew escaped without some wounds by the shafts of ridicule; not that her merriment was always the consequence of total contempt, for she often honoured virtue where she laughed at affectation.

For these practices, and who can wonder, the cry was raised against her from every quarter, and to hunt her down was generally determined. Every eye was watching for a fault, and every tongue was busy to supply its share of defamation. With the most unpolluted purity of mind, she was censured as too free of favours, because she was not afraid to talk with men: with generous sensibility of every human excellence, she was thought cold or envious, because she could not scatter praise with undistinguished profusion: with tenderness that agonized at real misery, she was charged with delight in the pain of others, when she would not condole with those whom she knew to counterfeit affliction. She derided false appearances of kindness and of pity, and was therefore avoided as an enemy to society. As she seldom commended or censured but with some limitations and exceptions, the world condemned her as indifferent to the good and bad; and because she was often doubtful where others were confident, she was charged with laxity of principles, while her days were distracted and her rest broken by niceties of honour and scruples of morality.

Report had now made her so formidable that all flattered and all shunned her. If a lover gave a ball to his mistress and her friends, it was stipulated that Floretta should not be invited. If she entered a public room, the ladies courtsied, and shrunk away, for there was no such thing as speaking, but Floretta would find something to criticise. If a girl was more sprightly than her aunt, she was threatened that in a little time she would be like Floretta. Visits were very diligently paid when Floretta was known not to be at home; and no mother trusted her daughter to herself without a caution, if she should meet

Floretta, to leave the company as soon as she could.

With all this Floretta made sport at first, but in time grew weary of general hostility. She would have been content with a few friends, but no friendship was durable: it was the fashion to desert her, and with the fashion what fidelity will contend? She could have easily amused herself in solitude, but that she thought it mean to quit the field to treachery and folly.

Persecution at length tired her constancy, and she implored Lilinet to rid her of her wit: Lilinet complied, and walked up the mountain, but was often forced to stop and wait for her follower. When they came to the flinty fountain, Floretta filled a small cup and slowly brought it to her lips, but the water was insupportably bitter. She just tasted it, and dashed it to the ground, diluted the bitterness at the fountain of alabaster, and resolved to keep her wit with all its consequences.

Being now a wit for life, she surveyed the various conditions of mankind with such superiority of sentiment, that she found few distinctions to be envied or desired, and therefore did not very soon make another visit to the fountain. At length being alarmed by sickness, she resolved to drink length of life from the golden cup. She returned elated and secure, for though the longevity acquired was indeterminate, she considered death as far distant, and therefore suffered it not to intrude upon her pleasures.

But length of life included not perpetual health. She felt herself continually decaying, and saw the world fading about her. The delights of her early days would delight no longer, and however widely she extended her view, no new pleasure could be found; her friends, her enemies, her admirers, her rivals, dropped one by one into the grave, and with those who succeeded them she had neither community of joys nor strife of competition.

By this time she began to doubt whether old age were not dangerous to virtue; whether pain would not produce peevishness, and peevishness impair benevolence. She thought that the spectacle of life might be too long continued, and the vices which were often seen might raise less abhorrence; that resolution might be sapped by time, and let that virtue sink, which in its firmest state it had not without difficulty supported; and that it was vain to delay the hour which must come at last, and might come at a time of less preparation and greater imbecility.

These thoughts led her to Lilinet, whom she accompanied to the flinty fountain; where, after a short combat with herself, she drank the bitter water. They walked back to the favourite bush pensive and silent; "And now," said she, "accept my thanks for the last benefit that Floretta can receive." Lady Lilinet dropped a tear, impressed upon her lips the final kiss, and resigned her, as she resigned herself, to the course of nature.

LETTERS

BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D

SELECTED FROM

THE COLLECTION OF MRS. PIOZZI, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

To Mr. James Elphinston.

Sept. 25th, 1750.

Dear Sir,

You have, as I find by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother; and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother, now eighty-two years of age, whom therefore I must soon lose, unless it please God that she rather should mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mrs. Strahan, and think I do myself honour, when I tell you, that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to *you*, nor to *me*, of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues, of which we are lamenting our deprivation.

The greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard, and excite, and elevate his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death, resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts; and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is, indeed, of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God: yet, surely, there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those, whom we love, is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable, that that union, which has received the divine approbation, shall continue to eternity.

There is one expedient, by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come; for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by,

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged, most obedient,

And most humble servant,

Sam. Johnson.

LETTER II.—To Mrs. Thrale.

London, Aug. 12th, 1765.

Madam,

If you have really so good an opinion of me as you express, it will not be necessary to inform you how unwillingly I miss the opportunity of coming to Brighthelmstone in Mr. Thrale's company; or, since I cannot do what I wish first, how eagerly I shall catch the second degree of pleasure, by coming to you and him, as soon as I can dismiss my work from my hands.

I am afraid to make promises even to myself; but I hope that the week after the next will be the end of my present business. When business is done, what remains but pleasure? and where should pleasure be sought, but under Mrs. Thrale's influence?

Do not blame me for a delay by which I must suffer so much, and by which I suffer alone. If you cannot think I am good, pray think I am mending, and that in time I may deserve to be, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER III.—To the Same.

Litchfield, July 20th, 1767.

Madam,

Though I have been away so much longer than I purposed or expected, I have found nothing that withdraws my affections from the friends whom I left behind, or which makes me less desirous of reposing at that place which your kindness and Mr. Thrale's allows me to call my *home*.

Miss Lucy* is more kind and civil than I expected, and has raised my esteem by many excellences very noble and resplendent, though a little discoloured by hoary virginity. Every thing else recalls to my remembrance years, in which I proposed what, I am afraid, I have not done, and promised myself pleasure which I have not found. But complaint can be of no use; and why then should I depress your hopes by my lamentations? I suppose it is the condition of humanity to design what never will be done, and to hope what never will be obtained. But among the vain hopes, let me not number the hope which I have, of being long, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER IV.—To the Same.

Litchfield, August 14th, 1769.

Madam,

I set out on Thursday morning, and found my companion, to whom I was very much a stranger,

* Miss Lucy Porter, daughter to Dr. Johnson's wife by a former husband.

more agreeable than I expected. We went cheerfully forward, and passed the night at Coventry. We came in late, and went out early; and therefore I did not send for my cousin Tom; but I design to make him some amends for the omission.

Next day we came early to Lucy, who was. I believe, glad to see us. She had saved her best gooseberries upon the tree for me; and, as Steele says, "I was neither too proud nor too wise" to gather them. I have rambled a very little *inter fontes et flumina nota*, but I am not yet well. They have cut down the trees in George-Lane. Evelyn, in his book of Forest Trees, tells us of wicked men that cut down trees, and never prospered afterwards; yet nothing has deterred these audacious aldermen from violating the Hamadryads of George-Lane. As an impartial traveller, I must however tell, that, in Stow-Street, where I left a draw-well, I have found a pump, but the lading-well in this ill-fated George-Lane lies shamefully neglected.

I am going to-day, or to-morrow, to Ashbourne; but I am at a loss how I shall get back in time to London. Here are only chance coaches, so that there is no certainty of a place. If I do not come, let it not hinder your journey. I can be but a few days behind you; and I will follow in the Brighthelmstone coach. But I hope to come.

I took care to tell Miss Porter, that I have got another Lucy. I hope she is well. Tell Mrs. Salusbury, that I beg her stay at Streatham, for little Lucy's sake. I am, &c.

LETTER V.—To the Same.

Litchfield, July 11th, 1770.

Madam,

Since my last letter, nothing extraordinary has happened. Rheumatism, which has been very troublesome, is grown better. I have not yet seen Dr. Taylor, and July runs fast away. I shall not have much time for him, if he delays much longer to come or send. Mr. Green, the apothecary, has found a book, which tells who paid levies in our parish, and how much they paid, above a hundred years ago. Do you not think we study this book hard? Nothing is like going to the bottom of things. Many families that paid the parish-rates are now extinct, like the race of Hercules. *Pulvis et umbra sumus.* What is nearest us touches us most. The passions rise higher at domestic than at imperial tragedies. I am not wholly unaffected by the revolutions of Sadler-Street; nor can forbear to mourn a little when old names vanish away, and new come into their place.

Do not imagine, Madam, that I wrote this letter for the sake of these philosophical meditations; for when I began it, I had neither Mr. Green, nor his book, in my thoughts; but was resolved to write, and did not know what I had to send, but my respects to Mrs. Salusbury, and Mr. Thrale, and Harry, and the Misses. I am, dearest Madam, your, &c.

LETTER VI.—To the Same.

Ashbourne, July 23d, 1770.

Dearest Madam,

There had not been so long an interval between my two last letters, but that when I came hither I did not at first understand the hours of the post.

I have seen the great bull; and very great he is. I have seen likewise his heir apparent, who promises to inherit all the bulk and all the virtues of his sire. I have seen the man who offered a hundred guineas for the young bull, while he was yet little better than a calf. Matlock, I am afraid, I shall not see, but I purpose to see Dovedale, and, after all this seeing, I hope to see you. I am, &c.

LETTER VII.—To the Same.

Ashbourne, July 3d, 1771

Dear Madam,

Last Saturday I came to Ashbourne; the dangers or the pleasures of the journey I have at present no disposition to recount; else might I paint the beauties of my native plains; might I tell of the "smiles of nature and the charms of art;" else might I relate how I crossed the Staffordshire canal, one of the great efforts of human labour, and human contrivance; which, from the bridge on which I viewed it, passed away on either side, and loses itself in distant regions, uniting waters that nature had divided, and dividing lands which nature had united. I might tell how these reflections fermented in my mind till the chaise stopped at Ashbourne, at Ashbourne in the Peak. Let not the barren name of the Peak terrify you; I have never wanted strawberries and cream. The great bull has no disease but age. I hope in time to be like the great bull: and hope you will be like him too hundred years hence.

I am, &c

LETTER VIII.—To the Same.

Ashbourne, July 10th, 1771

Dearest Madam,

I am obliged to my friend Harry for his remembrance; but think it a little hard that I hear nothing from Miss.

There has been a man here to-day to take a farm. After some talk he went to see the bull, and said that he had seen a bigger. Do you think he is likely to get the farm?

Toujours strawberries and cream.

Dr. Taylor is much better, and my rheumatism is less painful. Let me hear in return as much good of you and Mrs. Salusbury. You despise the Dog and Duck; things that are at hand are always slighted. I remember that Dr. Grevil, of Gloucester, sent for that water when his wife was in the same danger; but he lived near Malvern, and you live near the Dog and Duck. Thus, in difficult cases, we naturally trust most what we least know.

Why Bormefield, supposing that a lotion can do good, should despise laurel-water in comparison with his own receipt, I do not see; and see still less why he should laugh at that which Wall thinks efficacious. I am afraid philosophy will not warrant much hope in a lotion.

Be pleased to make my compliments from Mrs. Salusbury to Susy.

I am, &c.

LETTER IX.—To the Same.

October 31st, 1772.

Madam,

Though I am just informed, that, by some accidental negligence, the letter which I wrote on Thursday was not given to the post, yet I cannot refuse myself the gratification of writing again to my mistress; not that I have any thing to tell, but that by showing how much I am employed upon you, I hope to keep you from forgetting me.

Doctor Taylor asked me this morning on what I was thinking? and I was thinking on Lucy. I hope Lucy is a good girl. But she cannot yet be so good as Queeney. I have got nothing yet for Queeney's cabinet.

I hope dear Mrs. Salusbury grows no worse. I wish any thing could be found that would make her better. You must remember her admonition, and bustle in the brewhouse. When I come, you may expect to have your hands full with all of us.

Our bulls and cows are all well; but we yet hate the man that had seen a bigger bull. Our deer have died; but many are left. Our waterfall at the garden makes a great roaring this wet weather.

And so no more at present from, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER X.—To the Same.

Nov. 23d, 1772.

Dear Madam,

I am sorry that none of your letters bring better news of the poor dear lady. I hope her pain is not great. To have a disease confessedly incurable and apparently mortal, is a very heavy affliction; and it is still more grievous when pain is added to despair.

Every thing else in your letter pleased me very well, except that when I come I entreat I may not be flattered, as your letters flatter me. You have read of heroes and princes ruined by flattery, and I question if any of them had a flatterer so dangerous as you. Pray keep strictly to your character of governess.

I cannot yet get well; my nights are flatulent and unquiet, but my days are tolerably easy, and Taylor says that I look much better than when I came hither. You will see when I come, and I can take your word.

Our house affords no revolutions. The great bull is well. But I write not merely to think on you, for I do that without writing, but to keep you a little thinking on me. I perceive that I have taken a broken piece of paper, but that is not the greatest fault that you must forgive in, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER XI.—To the Same.

Nov. 27th, 1772.

Dear Madam,

If you are so kind as to write to me on Saturday, the day on which you will receive this, I shall have it before I leave Ashbourne. I am to go to Litchfield on Wednesday, and purpose to find my way to London through Birmingham and Oxford.

I was yesterday at Chatsworth. It is a very fine house. I wish you had been with me to see it; for then, as we are apt to want matter of talk, we should have gained something new to talk on. They complimented me with playing the fountain, and opening the cascade. But I am of my friend's opinion, that when one has seen the ocean, cascades are but little things.

I am in hope of a letter to-day from you or Queeney, but the post has made some blunder, and the packet is not yet distributed. I wish it may bring me a little good of you all. I am, &c.

LETTER XII.—To the Same.

Tuesday, Jan. 26th, 1773

Madam,

The inequalities of human life have always employed the meditation of deep thinkers, and I cannot forbear to reflect on the difference between your condition and my own. You live upon mock-turtle, and stewed rumps of beef; I dined yesterday upon crumpets. You sit with parish officers, caressing and caressed, the idol of the table, and the wonder of the day. I pine in the solitude of sickness, not bad enough to be pitied, and not well enough to be endured. You sleep away the night, and laugh or scold away the day. I cough and grumble, and grumble and cough. Last night was very tedious, and this day makes no promises of much ease. However, I have this day put on my shoe, and hope that gout is gone. I shall have only the cough to contend with, and I doubt whether I shall get rid of that without change of place. I caught cold in the coach as I went away, and am disordered by very little things. Is it accident or age? I am, dearest Madam, &c.

LETTER XIII.—To the Same.

March 17th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

To tell you that I am sorry both for the poor lady and for you is useless. I cannot help either of you. The weakness of mind is perhaps only a casual interruption or intermission of the attention, such as we all suffer when some weighty care or urgent calamity has possession of the mind. She will compose herself. She is unwilling to die, and the first conviction of approaching death raised great perturbation. I think she has but very lately thought death close at hand. She will compose herself to do that as well as she can, which must at last be done. May she not want the divine assistance!

You, Madam, will have a great loss; a greater than is common in the loss of a parent. Fill your mind with hope of her happiness, and turn your thoughts first to Him who gives and takes away, in whose presence the living and dead are standing together. Then remember, that when this mournful duty is paid, others yet remain of equal obligation, and, we may hope, of less painful performance. Grief is a species of idleness, and the necessity of attention to the present preserves us, by the merciful disposition of Providence, from being lacerated

and devoured by sorrow for the past. You must think on your husband and your children, and do what this dear lady has done for you.

Not to come to town while the great struggle continues is undoubtedly well resolved. But do not harass yourself into danger; you owe the care of your health to all that love you, at least to all whom it is your duty to love. You cannot give such a mother too much, if you do not give her what belongs to another. I am, &c.

LETTER XIV.—To the Same.

April 27th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

Hope is more pleasing than fear, but not less fallacious; you know, when you do not try to deceive yourself, that the disease which at last is to destroy, must be gradually growing worse, and that it is vain to wish for more than that the descent to death may be slow and easy. In this wish I join with you, and hope it will be granted. Dear, dear lady! whenever she is lost she will be missed, and whenever she is remembered she will be lamented. Is it a good or an evil to me that she now loves me? It is surely a good; for you will love me better, and we shall have a new principle of concord; and I shall be happier with honest sorrow, than with sullen indifference: and far happier still than counterfeited sympathy.

I am reasoning upon a principle very far from certain, a confidence of survivance. You or I, or both, may be called into the presence of the Supreme Judge before her. I have lived a life of which I do not like the review. Surely I shall in time live better.

I sat down with an intention to write high compliments; but my thoughts have taken another course, and some other time must now serve to tell you with what other emotions, benevolence, and fidelity, I am, &c.

LETTER XV.—To the Same.

May 17th, 1773.

Madam,

Never imagine that your letters are long; they are always too short for my curiosity. I do not know that I was ever content with a single perusal.

Of dear Mrs. Salusbury I never expect much better news than you send me; *de pis en pis* is the natural and certain course of her dreadful malady. I am content when it leaves her ease enough for the exercise of her mind.

Why should Mr. * * * * * suppose that what I took the liberty of suggesting was concerted with you? He does not know how much I revolve his affairs, and how honestly I desire his prosperity. I hope he has let the hint take some hold of his mind.

Your declaration to Miss * * * * * is more general than my opinions allow. I think an unlimited promise of acting by the opinion of another so wrong, that nothing, or hardly any thing, can make it right. All unnecessary vows are folly, because they suppose a prescience of the future which has not been given us. They are, I think, a crime, because they resign that life to chance which God has given us to be regulated by reason; and superinduce a kind of fatality, from which it is the great privilege of our nature to be free. Unlimited obedience is due only to the universal Father of Heaven and Earth. My parents may be mad and foolish; may be wicked and malicious, may be erroneously religious, or absurdly scrupulous. I am not bound to compliance with mandates either positive or negative, which either religion condemns, or reason rejects. There wanders about the world a wild notion, which extends over marriage more than over any other transaction. If Miss * * * * followed a trade, would it be said that she was bound in conscience to give or refuse credit at her father's choice? And is not marriage a thing in which she is more interested, and has therefore more right of choice? When I may suffer for my own crimes, when I may be sued for my own debts, I may judge by parity of reason for my own happiness. The parent's moral right can arise only from his kindness, and his civil right only from his money.

Conscience cannot dictate obedience to the wicked, or compliance with the foolish; and of interest mere prudence is the judge.

If the daughter is bound without a promise, she promises nothing; and if she is not bound, she promises too much.

What is meant by tying up money in trade I do not understand. No money is so little tied as that which is employed in trade. Mr. * * * * perhaps only means, that in consideration of money to be advanced, he will oblige his son to be a trader. This is reasonable enough. Upon ten thousand pounds diligently occupied, they may live in great plenty and splendour, without the mischiefs of idleness.

I can write a long letter as well as my mistress; and shall be glad that my long letters may be as welcome as hers.

My nights are grown again very uneasy and troublesome. I know not that the country will mend them; but I hope your company will mend my days. Though I cannot now expect much attention, and would not wish for more than can be spared from the poor dear lady, yet I shall see you and hear you every now and then; and to see and hear you, is always to hear wit, and to see virtue.

I shall, I hope, see you to-morrow, and a little on the two next days; and with that little I must for the present try to be contented. I am, &c.

LETTER XVI.—To the Same.

August 12th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

We left London on Friday the 6th, not very early, and travelled without any memorable accident through a country which I had seen before. In the evening I was not well, and was forced to stop at Stilton, one stage short of Stamford, where we intended to have lodged.

On the 7th we passed through Stamford and Grantham, and dined at Newark, where I had only time toob serve that the market-place was uncommonly spacious and neat. In London we should call it a square, though the sides were neither straight nor parallel. We came, at night,

to Doncaster, and went to church in the morning, where Chambers found the monument of Robert of Doncaster, who says on his stone something like this;—What I gave, that I have; what I spent, that I had; what I left, that I lost.—So saith Robert of Doncaster, who reigned in the world sixty-seven years, and all that time lived not one. Here we were invited to dinner, and therefore made no great haste away.

We reached York, however, that night; I was much disordered with old complaints. Next morning we saw the Minster, an edifice of loftiness and elegance equal to the highest hopes of architecture. I remember nothing but the dome of St. Paul's that can be compared with the middle walk. The Chapter-house is a circular building, very stately, but I think excelled by the Chapter-house of Lincoln.

I then went to see the ruins of the Abbey, which are almost vanished, and I remember nothing of them distinct.

The next visit was to the jail, which they call the castle; a fabric built lately, such is terrestrial mutability, out of the materials of the ruined abbey. The under jailer was very officious to show his fetters, in which there was no contrivance. The head jailer came in, and seeing me look, I suppose, fatigued, offered me wine, and when I went away, would not suffer his servant to take money. The jail is accounted the best in the kingdom, and you find the jailer deserving of his dignity.

We dined at York, and went on to Northallerton, a place of which I know nothing, but that it afforded us a lodging on Monday night, and about two hundred and seventy years ago gave birth to Roger Ascham.

Next morning we changed our horses at Darlington, where Mr. Cornelius Harrison, a cousin-german of mine, was perpetual curate. He was the only one of my relations who ever rose in fortune above penury, or in character above neglect.

The church is built crosswise, with a fine spire, and might invite a traveller to survey it; but I perhaps wanted vigour, and thought I wanted time.

The next stage brought us to Durham, a place of which Mr. Thrale bade me take particular notice. The bishop's palace has the appearance of an old feudal castle, built upon an eminence, and looking down upon the river, upon which was formerly thrown a drawbridge, as I suppose, to be raised at night lest the Scots should pass it.

The cathedral has a massiness and solidity such as I have seen in no other place; it rather awes than pleases, as it strikes with a kind of gigantic dignity, and aspires to no other praise than that of rocky solidity and indeterminate duration. I had none of my friends resident, and therefore saw but little. The library is mean and scanty.

At Durham, beside all expectation, I met an old friend: Miss Fordyce is married there to a physician. We met, I think, with honest kindness on both sides. I thought her much decayed, and having since heard that the banker had involved her husband in his extensive ruin, I cannot forbear to think that I saw in her withered features more impression of sorrow than of time—

Qua terra patet, sera regnat Erinnys.

He that wanders about the world sees new forms of human misery, and if he chances to meet an old friend, meets a face darkened with troubles.

On Tuesday night we came hither; yesterday I took some care of myself, and to-day I am *quite polite*. I have been taking a view of all that could be shown me, and find that all very near to nothing. You have often heard me complain of finding myself disappointed by books of travels; I am afraid travel itself will end likewise in disappointment. One town, one country, is very like another: civilized nations have the same customs, and barbarous nations have the same nature: there are indeed minute discriminations both of places and of manners, which perhaps are not wanting of curiosity, but which a traveller seldom stays long enough to investigate and compare. The dull utterly neglect them; the acute see a little, and supply the rest with fancy and conjecture.

I shall set out again to-morrow; but I shall not, I am afraid, see Alnwick, for Dr. Percy is not there. I hope to lodge to-morrow night at Berwick, and the next at Edinburgh, where I shall direct Mr. Drummond, bookseller, at Ossian's head, to take care of my letters.

I hope the little dears are all well, and that my dear master and mistress may go somewhither; but wherever you go do not forget, Madam, your most humble servant.

I am pretty well.

August 15th.

Thus far I had written at Newcastle. I forgot to send it. I am now at Edinburgh; and have been this day running about. I run pretty well.

LETTER XVII.—To the Same.

Edinburgh, Aug. 17th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

On the 13th I left Newcastle, and in the afternoon came to Alnwick, where we were treated with great civility by the Duke: I went through the apartments, walked on the wall, and climbed the towers. That night we lay at Belford, and on the next night came to Edinburgh. On Sunday (15th) I went to the English chapel. After dinner Dr. Robertson came in, and promised to show me the place. On Monday I saw their public buildings: the cathedral, which I told Robertson I wished to see because it had once been a church, the courts of justice, the parliament house, the advocates' library, the repository of records, the college and its library, and the palace, particularly the old tower where the king of Scotland seized David Rizzio in the queen's presence. Most of their buildings are very mean; and the whole town bears some resemblance to the old part of Birmingham.

Boswell has very handsome and spacious rooms; level with the ground on one side of the house, and on the other four stories high.

At dinner on Monday were the Dutchess of Douglas, an old lady, who talks broad Scotch with a paralytic voice, and is scarcely understood by her own countrymen; the Lord Chief Baron, Sir Adolphus Oughton, and many more. At supper there was such a conflux of company that I could scarcely support the tumult. I have

never been well in the whole journey, and am very easily disordered.

This morning I saw at breakfast Dr. Blacklock, the blind poet, who does not remember to have seen light, and is read to, by a poor scholar, in Latin, Greek, and French. He was originally a poor scholar himself. I looked on him with reverence. To-morrow our journey begins; I know not when I shall write again. I am but poorly. I am, &c.

LETTER XVIII.—To the Same.

Bamff, Aug. 25th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

It has so happened that though I am perpetually thinking on you, I could seldom find opportunity to write; I have in fourteen days sent only one letter; you must consider the fatigues of travel, and the difficulties encountered in a strange country.

August 18th, I passed, with Boswell, the Frith of Forth, and began our journey; in the passage we observed an island, which I persuaded my companions to survey. We found it a rock somewhat troublesome to climb, about a mile long, and half a mile broad; in the middle were the ruins of an old fort, which had on one of the stones—Maria Re. 1564. It had been only a blockhouse, one story high. I measured two apartments, of which the walls were entire, and found them twenty-seven feet long, and twenty-three broad. The rock had some grass and many thistles; both cows and sheep were grazing. There was a spring of water. The name is Inchkeith. Look on your maps. This visit took about an hour. We pleased ourselves with being in a country all our own, and then went back to the boat, and landed at Kinghorn, a mean town; and travelling through Kirkaldie, a very long town meanly built, and Cowpar, which I could not see because it was night, we came late to St. Andrew's, the most ancient of the Scotch universities, and once the see of the Primate of Scotland. The inn was full; but lodgings were provided for us at the house of the professor of rhetoric, a man of elegant manners, who showed us, in the morning, the poor remains of a stately cathedral, demolished in Knox's reformation, and now only to be imagined by tracing its foundation, and contemplating the little ruins that are left. Here was once a religious house. Two of the vaults or cellars of the subprior are even yet entire. In one of them lives an old woman, who claims an hereditary residence in it, boasting that her husband was the sixth tenant of this gloomy mansion, in a lineal descent, and claims by her marriage with this lord of the cavern an alliance with the Bruces. Mr. Boswell stayed a while to interrogate her, because he understood her language; she told him, that she and her cat lived together; that she had two sons somewhere, who might perhaps be dead; that when there were quality in the town notice was taken of her, and that now she was neglected, but did not trouble them. Her habitation contained all that she had; her turf for fire was laid in one place, and her balls of coal-dust in another, but her bed seemed to be clean. Boswell asked her, if she never heard any noises; but she could tell him of nothing supernatural, though she often wandered in the night among the graves and ruins, only she had sometimes notice by dreams of the death of her relations. We then viewed the remains of a castle on the margin of the sea, in which the archbishops resided, and in which Cardinal Beatoun was killed.

The professors who happened to be resident in the vacation made a public dinner, and treated us very kindly and respectfully. They showed us their colleges, in one of which there is a library that, for luminousness and elegance, may vie at least with the new edifice at Streatham. But learning seems not to prosper among them; one of their colleges has been lately alienated, and one of their churches lately deserted. An experiment was made of planting a shrubbery in the church, but it did not thrive.

Why the place should thus fall to decay, I know not; for education, such as is here to be had, is sufficiently cheap. The term, or, as they call it, their session, lasts seven months in the year, which the students of the highest rank and greatest expense may pass here for twenty pounds, in which are included board, lodging, books, and the continual instruction of three professors.

20th. We left St. Andrew's, well satisfied with our reception, and crossing the Frith of Tay, came to Dundee, a dirty, despicable town. We passed afterwards through Aberbrothic, famous once for an abbey, of which there are only a few fragments left; but those fragments testify that the fabric was once of great extent, and of stupendous magnificence. Two of the towers are yet standing, though shattered; into one of them Boswell climbed, but found the stairs broken: the way into the other we did not see, and had not time to search; I believe it might be ascended, but the top, I think, is open.

We lay at Montrose, a neat place, with a spacious area for the market, and an elegant townhouse.

21st. We travelled towards Aberdeen, another university, and in the way dined at Lord Monboddo's, the Scotch Judge, who has lately written a strange book about the origin of language, in which he traces monkeys up to men, and says that in some countries the human species have tails like other beasts. He inquired for these long-tailed men of Banks, and was not well pleased that they had not been found in all his peregrination. He talked nothing of this to me, and I hope we parted friends; for we agreed pretty well, only we disputed in adjusting the claims of merit between a shopkeeper of London and a savage of the American wildernesses. Our opinions were, I think, maintained on both sides without full conviction: Monboddo declared boldly for the savage, and I, perhaps for that reason, sided with the citizen.

We came late to Aberdeen, where I found my dear mistress's letter, and learned that all our little people were happily recovered of the measles. Every part of your letter was pleasing.

There are two cities of the name of Aberdeen: the old town, built about a mile inland, once the see of a bishop, which contains the King's College, and the remains of the cathedral, and the new town, which stands, for the sake of trade upon a frith or arm of the sea, so that ships rest against the quay.

The two cities have their separate magistrates,

and the two colleges are in effect two universities, which confer degrees independently of each other.

New Aberdeen is a large town, built almost wholly of that granite which is used for the new pavement in London, which, hard as it is, they square with very little difficulty. Here I first saw the women in plaids. The plaid makes at once a hood and cloak, without cutting or sewing, merely by the manner of drawing the opposite sides over the shoulders. The maids at the inns run over the house barefoot; and children, not dressed in rags, go without shoes or stockings. Shoes are indeed not yet in universal use; they came late into this country. One of the professors told us, as we were mentioning a fort built by Cromwell, that the country owed much of its present industry to Cromwell's soldiers. They taught us, said he, to raise cabbage and make shoes. How they lived without shoes may yet be seen; but in the passage through villages, it seems to him that surveys their gardens, that when they had not cabbage they had nothing.

Education is here of the same price as at St. Andrew's, only the session is but from the 1st of November to the 1st of April. The academical buildings seem rather to advance than decline. They showed their libraries, which were not very splendid, but some manuscripts were so exquisitely penned that I wished my dear mistress to have seen them. I had an unexpected pleasure by finding an old acquaintance now professor of physic in the King's College: we were on both sides glad of the interview, having not seen nor perhaps thought on one another for many years; but we had no emulation, nor had either of us risen to the other's envy, and our old kindness was easily renewed. I hope we shall never try the effect of so long an absence, and that I shall always be, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER XIX.—To the Same.

Inverness, Aug. 28th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

August 23d, I had the honour of attending the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, and was presented with the freedom of the city, not in a gold box, but in good Latin. Let me pay Scotland one just praise! there was no officer gaping for a fee; this could have been said of no city on the English side of the Tweed. I wore my patent of freedom *pro more* in my hat, from the new town to the old, about a mile. I then dined with my friend, the professor of physic, at his house, and saw the King's College. Boswell was very angry that the Aberdeen professors would not talk. When I was at the English church in Aberdeen, I happened to be espied by Lady Di. Middleton, whom I had some time seen in London; she told what she had seen to Mr. Boyd, Lord Errol's brother, who wrote us an invitation to Lord Errol's house, called Slane's Castle. We went thither on the next day, (24th of August,) and found a house, not old, except but one tower, built upon the margin of the sea upon a rock, scarce accessible from the sea; at one corner a tower makes a perpendicular continuation of the lateral surface of the rock, so that it is impracticable to walk round: the house inclosed a square court, and on all sides within the court is a piazza or gallery two stories high. We came in as we were invited to dinner, and after dinner offered to go; but Lady Errol sent us word by Mr. Boyd, that if we went before Lord Errol came home we must never be forgiven, and ordered out the coach to show us two curiosities. We were first conducted by Mr. Boyd to Dunbuys, or the yellow rock. Dunbuys is a rock consisting of two protuberances, each perhaps one hundred yards round, joined together by a narrow neck, and separated from the land by a very narrow channel or gully. These rocks are the haunts of sea-fowl, whose clang, though this is not their season, we heard at a distance. The eggs and the young are gathered here in great numbers at the time of breeding. There is a bird here called a coote, which, though not much bigger than a duck, lays a larger egg than a goose. We went then to see the Buller or Boulloir of Buchan: Buchan is the name of the district, and the Buller is a small creek or gulf into which the sea flows through an arch of the rock. We walked round it, and saw it black at a great depth. It has its name from the violent ebullition of the water, when high winds or high tides drive it up the arch into the basin. Walking a little farther I spied some boats, and told my companions that we would go into the Buller and examine it. There was no danger; all was calm; we went through the arch, and found ourselves in a narrow gulf surrounded by craggy rocks, of height not stupendous, but to a Mediterranean visiter uncommon. On each side was a cave, of which the fishermen knew not the extent, in which smugglers hide their goods, and sometimes parties of pleasure take a dinner. I am, &c.

LETTER XX.—To the Same.

Skie, Sept. 6th, 1773

Dearest Madam,

I am now looking on the sea from a house of Sir Alexander Macdonald, in the Isle of Skie. Little did I once think of seeing this region of obscurity, and little did you once expect a salutation from this verge of European life. I have now the pleasure of going where nobody goes, and seeing what nobody sees. Our design is to visit several of the smaller islands, and then pass over to the south-west of Scotland.

I returned from the sight of Buller's Buchan to Lord Errol's, and, having seen his library, had for a time only to look upon the sea, which rolled between us and Norway. Next morning, August 25th, we continued our journey through a country not uncultivated, but so denuded of its woods, that in all this journey I had not travelled a hundred yards between hedges, or seen five trees fit for the carpenter. A few small plantations may be found, but I believe scarcely any thirty years old; at least, they are all posterior to the Union. This day we dined with a country gentleman, who has in his grounds the remains of a Druid's temple, which, when it is complete, is nothing more than a circle or double circle of stones, placed at equal distances, with a flat stone, perhaps an altar, at a certain point, and a stone taller than the rest at the opposite

point. The tall stone is erected, I think, at the south. Of these circles there are many in all the unfrequented parts of the island. The inhabitants of these parts respect them as memorials of the sepulture of some illustrious person. Here I saw a few trees. We lay at Bamff.

August 26th. We dined at Elgin, where we saw the ruins of a noble cathedral; the chapter-house is yet standing. A great part of Elgin is built with small piazzas to the lower story. We went on to Foris, over the heath where Macbeth met the witches, but had no adventure; only in the way we saw for the first time some houses with fruit-trees about them. The improvements of the Scotch are for immediate profit; they do not yet think it quite worth their while to plant what will not produce something to be eaten or sold in a very little time. We rested at Foris.

A very great proportion of the people are barefoot; shoes are not yet considered as necessaries of life. It is still the custom to send out the sons of gentlemen without them into the streets and ways. There are more beggars than I have ever seen in England: they beg, if not silently, yet very modestly.

Next day we came to Nairn, a miserable town, but a royal burgh, of which the chief annual magistrate is styled Lord Provost. In the neighbourhood we saw the castle of the old Thane of Cawdor. There is one ancient tower with its battlements and winding stairs yet remaining; the rest of the house is, though not modern, of later erection.

On the 28th we went to Fort George, which is accounted the most regular fortification in the island. The major of artillery walked with us round the walls, and showed us the principles upon which every part was constructed, and the way in which it could be defended. We dined with the governor, Sir Eyre Coote, and his officers. It was a very pleasant and instructive day, but nothing puts my honoured mistress out of my mind.

At night we came to Inverness, the last considerable town in the North, where we stayed all the next day, for it was Sunday, and saw the ruins of what is called Macbeth's castle. It never was a large house, but was strongly situated. From Inverness we were to travel on horseback.

August 30th. We set out with four horses. We had two Highlanders to run by us, who were active, officious, civil, and hardy. Our journey was for many miles along a military way made upon the banks of Lough Ness, a water about eighteen miles long, but not, I think, half a mile broad. Our horses were not bad, and the way was very pleasant; the rock out of which the road was cut was covered with birch-trees, fern, and heath. The lake below was beating its bank by a gentle wind, and the rocks beyond the water on the right stood sometimes horrid and wild, and sometimes opened into a kind of bay, in which there was a spot of cultivated ground, yellow with corn. In one part of the way we had trees on both sides for perhaps half a mile.—Such a length of shade perhaps Scotland cannot show in any other place.

You are not to suppose that here are to be any more towns or inns. We came to a cottage which they call the General's Hut, where we alighted to dine, and had eggs and bacon, and mutton, with wine, rum, and whiskey. I had water.

At a bridge over the river, which runs into the Ness, the rocks rise on three sides, with a direction almost perpendicular, to a great height; they are in part covered with trees, and exhibit a kind of dreadful magnificence;—standing like the barriers of nature placed to keep different orders of being in perpetual separation. Near this bridge is the Fall of Fiers, a famous cataract, of which, by clambering over the rocks, we obtained a view. The water was low, and therefore we had only the pleasure of knowing that rain would make it at once pleasing and formidable; there will then be a mighty flood, foaming along a rocky channel, frequently obstructed by protuberances, and exasperated by reverberation, at last precipitated with a sudden descent, and lost in the depth of a gloomy chasm.

We came somewhat late to Fort Augustus, where the lieutenant-governor met us beyond the gates, and apologized that at that hour he could not, by the rules of a garrison, admit us otherwise than at a narrow door which only one can enter at a time. We were well entertained and well lodged, and next morning, after having viewed the fort, we pursued our journey.

Our way now lay over the mountains, which are not to be passed by climbing them directly, but by traversing; so that as we went forward we saw our baggage following us below in a direction exactly contrary. There is in these ways much labour but little danger, and perhaps other places, of which very terrific representations are made, are not in themselves more formidable. These roads have all been made by hewing the rock away with pickaxes, or bursting it with gunpowder. The stones so separated are often piled loose as a wall by the way-side. We saw an inscription importing the year in which one of the regiments made two thousand yards of the road eastward.

After tedious travel of some hours we came to what I believe we must call a village, a place where there were three huts built of turf; at one of which we were to have our dinner and our bed, for we could not reach any better place that night. This place is called Enoch in Glenmorrison. The house in which we lodged was distinguished by a chimney, the rest had only a hole for the smoke. Here we had eggs, and mutton, and a chicken and a sausage, and rum. In the afternoon tea was made by a very decent girl in a printed linen: she engaged me so much, that I made her a present of Cocker's arithmetic.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.—To the Same.

Skie, Sept. 14th, 1773

Dearest Madam,

The post which comes but once a week into these parts is so soon to go that I have not time to go on where I left off in my last letter. I have been several days in the island of Raarsa, and am now again in the Isle of Skie, but at the other end of it.

Skie is almost equally divided between the two great families of Macdonald and Macleod, other proprietors having only small districts.

The two great lords do not know within twenty square miles the contents of their own territories.

—— kept up but ill the reputation of Highland hospitality; we are now with Macleod, quite at the other end of the island, where there is a fine young gentleman and fine ladies. The ladies are studying Erse. I have a cold and am miserably deaf, and am troublesome to Lady Macleod; I force her to speak loud, but she will seldom speak loud enough.

Raarsa is an island about fifteen miles long and two broad, under the dominion of one gentleman, who has three sons and ten daughters; the eldest is the beauty of this part of the world, and has been polished at Edinburgh: they sing and dance, and, without expense, have upon their table most of what sea, air, or earth can afford. I intended to have written about Raarsa, but the post will not wait longer than while I send my compliments to my dear master and little mistresses. I am, &c.

LETTER XXII.—To the Same.

Skie, Sept. 21st, 1773.

Dearest Madam,

I am so vexed at the necessity of sending yesterday so short a letter, that I purpose to get a long letter beforehand by writing something every day, which I may the more easily do, as a cold makes me now too deaf to take the usual pleasure in conversation. Lady Macleod is very good to me; and the place at which we now are is equal, in strength of situation, in the wildness of the adjacent country, and in the plenty and elegance of the domestic entertainment, to a castle in Gothic romances. The sea, with a little island, is before us; cascades play within view. Close to the house is the formidable skeleton of an old castle, probably Danish, and the whole mass of building stands upon a protuberance of rock, inaccessible till of late but by a pair of stairs on the sea-side, and secure in ancient times against any enemy that was likely to invade the kingdom of Skie.

Macleod has offered me an island; if it were not too far off, I should hardly refuse it: my island would be pleasanter than Brighthelmstone, if you and my master could come to it; but I cannot think it pleasant to live quite alone,

Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis.

That I should be elated by the dominion of an island to forgetfulness of my friends at Streatham, I cannot believe, and I hope never to deserve that they should be willing to forget me.

It has happened that I have been often recognised in my journey where I did not expect it. At Aberdeen I found one of my acquaintance professor of physic; turning aside to dine with a country gentleman, I was owned at table by one who had seen me at a philosophical lecture; at Macdonald's I was claimed by a naturalist, who wanders about the islands to pick up curiosities; and I had once in London attracted the notice of Lady Macleod. I will now go on with my account.

The Highland girl made tea, and looked and talked not inelegantly; her father was by no means an ignorant or a weak man; there were books in the cottage, among which were some volumes of Prideaux's Connection; this man's conversation we were glad of while we staid. He had been *out*, as they call it, in forty-five, and still retained his old opinions. He was going to America, because his rent was raised beyond what he thought himself able to pay.

At night our beds were made, but we had some difficulty in persuading ourselves to lie down in them, though we had put on our own sheets; at last we ventured, and I slept very soundly in the vale of Glenmorrison, amidst the rocks and mountains. Next morning our landlord liked us so well, that he walked some miles with us for our company, through a country so wild and barren, that the proprietor does not, with all his pressure upon his tenants, raise more than four hundred pounds a-year for near one hundred square miles, or sixty thousand acres. He let us know that he had forty head of black cattle, a hundred goats, and a hundred sheep, upon a farm that he remembered let at five pounds a year, but for which he now paid twenty. He told us some stories of their march into England. At last he left us, and we went forward, winding among mountains, sometimes green and sometimes naked, commonly so steep as not easily to be climbed by the greatest vigour and activity: our way was often crossed by little rivulets, and we were entertained with small streams trickling from the rocks, which after heavy rains must be tremendous torrents.

About noon we came to a small glen, so they call a valley, which, compared with other places, appeared rich and fertile; here our guides desired us to stop, that the horses might graze, for the journey was very laborious, and no more grass would be found. We made no difficulty of compliance, and I sat down to take notes on a green bank, with a small stream running at my feet, in the midst of savage solitude, with mountains before me, and on either hand, covered with heath. I looked around me, and wondered that I was not more affected, but the mind is not at all times equally ready to be put in motion; if my mistress and master and Queeney had been there, we should have produced some reflections among us, either poetical or philosophical, for though *solitude be the nurse of woe*, conversation is often the parent of remarks and discoveries.

In about an hour we remounted, and pursued our journey. The lake by which we had travelled for some time ended in a river, which we passed by a bridge, and came to another glen, with a collection of huts, called Auknashealds; the huts were generally built of clods of earth, held together by the intertexture of vegetable fibres, of which earth there are great levels in Scotland, which they call mosses. Moss in Scotland is bog in Ireland, and moss-trooper is bog-trotter; there was, however, one hut built of loose stones, piled up with great thickness into a strong though not solid wall. From this house we obtained some great pails of milk, and having brought bread with us, we were liberally regaled. The inhabitants, a very coarse tribe, ignorant of any language but Erse, gathered so fast about us, that if we had not had Highlanders with us, they might have caused more alarm than pleasure; they are called the Clan of Macrae.

We had been told that nothing gratified the Highlanders so much as snuff and tobacco, and had accordingly stored ourselves with both at Fort Augustus. Boswell opened his treasure, and gave them each a piece of tobacco roll. We had more bread than we could eat for the present, and were more liberal than provident. Boswell cut it in slices, and gave them an opportunity of tasting wheaten bread for the first time. I then got some halfpence for a shilling, and made up the deficiencies of Boswell's distribution, who had given some money among the children. We then directed that the mistress of the stone-house should be asked what we must pay her: she, who perhaps had never before sold any thing but cattle, knew not, I believe, well what to ask, and referred herself to us: we obliged her to make some demand, and one of the Highlanders settled the account with her at a shilling. One of the men advised her, with the cunning that clowns never can be without, to ask more; but she said that a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and she offered part of it again. The Macraes were so well pleased with our behaviour, that they declared it the best day they had seen since the time of the old Laird of Macleod, who, I suppose, like us, stopped in their valley, as he was travelling to Skie.

We were mentioning this view of the Highlander's life at Macdonald's, and mentioning the Macraes with some degree of pity, when a Highland lady informed us that we might spare our tenderness, for she doubted not but the woman who supplied us with milk was mistress of thirteen or fourteen milch cows.

I cannot forbear to interrupt my narative. Boswell, with some of his troublesome kindness, has informed this family, and reminded me, that the 18th of September is my birth-day. The return of my birth-day, if I remember it, fills me with thoughts which it seems to be the general care of humanity to escape. I can now look back upon three score and four years, in which little has been done, and little has been enjoyed; a life diversified by misery, spent part in the sluggishness of penury, and part under the violence of pain, in gloomy discontent or importunate distress. But perhaps I am better than I should have been if I had been less afflicted. With this I will try to be content.

In proportion as there is less pleasure in retrospective considerations, the mind is more disposed to wander forward into futurity; but at sixty-four what promises, however liberal, of imaginary good can futurity venture to make? yet something will be always promised, and some promises will be always credited. I am hoping and I am praying that I may live better in the time to come, whether long or short, than I have yet lived, and in the solace of that hope endeavour to repose. Dear Quecney's day is next: I hope she at sixty-four will have less to regret.

I will now complain no more, but tell my mistress of my travels.

After we left the Macraes, we travelled on through a country like that which we passed in the morning. The Highlands are very uniform, for there is little variety in universal barrenness; the rocks, however, are not all naked, for some have grass on their sides, and birches and alders on their tops, and in the valleys are often broad and clear streams, which have little depth, and commonly run very quick; the channels are made by the violence of the wintry floods; the quickness of the stream is in proportion to the declivity of the descent, and the breadth of the channel makes the water shallow in a dry season.

There are red deer and roebucks in the mountains, but we found only goats in the road, and had very little entertainment as we travelled either for the eye or ear. There are, I fancy, no singing birds in the Highlands.

Towards night we came to a very formidable hill, called Rattiken, which we climbed with more difficulty than we had yet experienced, and at last came to Glanelg, a place on the sea-side opposite to Skie. We were by this time weary and disgusted, nor was our humour much mended by our inn, which, though it was built of lime and slate, the Highlander's description of a house which he thinks magnificent, had neither wine, bread, eggs, nor any thing, that we could eat or drink. When we were taken up stairs, a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed where one of us was to lie. Boswell blustered, but nothing could be got. At last a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who heard of our arrival, sent us rum and white sugar. Boswell was now provided for in part, and the landlord prepared some mutton chops, which we could not eat, and killed two hens, of which Boswell made his servant broil a limb, with what effect I know not. We had a lemon and a piece of bread, which supplied me with my supper. When the repast was ended, we began to deliberate upon bed; Mrs. Boswell had warned us that we should *catch something*, and had given us *sheets* for our *security*, for ——— and ———, she said, came back from Skie, so scratching themselves. I thought sheets a slender defence against the confederacy with which we were threatened, and by this time our Highlanders had found a place where they could get some hay: I ordered hay to be laid thick upon the bed, and slept upon it in my great coat: Boswell laid sheets upon his bed, and reposed in linen like a gentleman. The horses were turned out to grass, with a man to watch them. The hill Rattiken and the inn at Glanelg were the only things of which we, or travellers yet more delicate, could find any pretensions to complain.

Sept. 2d. I rose rustling from the hay, and went to tea, which I forget whether we found or brought. We saw the isle of Skie before us, darkening the horizon with its rocky coast. A boat was procured, and we launched into one of the straits of the Atlantic ocean. We had a passage of about twelve miles to the point where ——— resided, having come from his seat in the middle of the island, to a small house on the shore, as we believe, that he might with less reproach entertain us meanly. If he aspired to meanness, his retrograde ambition was completely gratified, but he did not succeed equally in escaping reproach. He had no cook, nor I suppose much provision, nor had the lady the common decencies of her tea-table; we picked up our sugar with our fingers. Boswell was very angry, and reproached him with his improper parsimony; I did not much reflect upon the conduct of a man with whom I was not likely to converse as long at any other time.

You will now expect that I should give you some account of the isle of Skie, of which, though I have been twelve days upon it, I have little to say. It is an island perhaps fifty miles long, so much indented by inlets of the sea, that there is no part of it removed from the water more than six miles. No part that I have seen is plain; you are always climbing or descending, and every step is upon rock or mire. A walk upon ploughed ground in England is a dance upon carpets compared to the toilsome drudgery of wandering in Skie. There is neither town nor village in the island, nor have I seen any house but Macleod's, that is not much below your habitation at Brighthelmstone. In the mountains there are stags and roebucks, but no hares, and few rabbits; nor have I seen any thing that interested me as a zoologist, except an otter, bigger than I thought an otter could have been.

You are perhaps imagining that I am withdrawing from the gay and the busy world into regions of peace and pastoral felicity, and am enjoying the reliques of the golden age; that I am surveying nature's magnificence from a mountain, or remarking her minuter beauties on the flowery bank of a winding rivulet; that I am invigorating myself in the sunshine, or delighting my imagination with being hidden from the invasion of human evils and human passions, in the darkness of a thicket; that I am busy in gathering shells and pebbles on the shore, or contemplative on a rock, from which I look upon the water, and consider how many waves are rolling between me and Streatham.

The use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking how things may be, to see them as they are. Here are mountains which I should once have climbed; but to climb steeps is now very laborious, and to descend them dangerous; and I am now content with knowing, that by scrambling up a rock, I shall only see other rocks, and a wider circuit of barren desolation. Of streams, we have here a sufficient number; but they murmur not upon pebbles, but upon rocks. Of flowers, if Chloris herself were here, I could present her only with the bloom of heath. Of lawns and thickets, he must read that would know them, for here is little sun and no shade. On the sea I look from my window, but am not much tempted to the shore; for since I came to this island, almost every breath of air has been a storm, and what is worse, a storm with all its severity, but without its magnificence, for the sea is here so broken into channels that there is not a sufficient volume of water either for lofty surges or a loud roar.

On Sept. 6th, we left ——— to visit Raarsa, the island which I have already mentioned. We were to cross part of Skie on horseback; a mode of travelling very uncomfortable, for the road is so narrow, where any road can be found, that only one can go, and so craggy, that the attention can never be remitted; it allows, therefore, neither the gayety of conversation, nor the laxity of solitude: nor has it in itself the amusement of much variety, as it affords only all the possible transpositions of bog, rock, and rivulet. Twelve miles, by computation, make a reasonable journey for a day.

At night we came to a tenant's house, of the first rank of tenants, where we were entertained better than at the landlord's. There were books both English and Latin. Company gathered about us, and we heard some talk of the second sight, and some talk of the events of forty-five; a year which will not soon be forgotten among the islanders. The next day we were confined by a storm. The company, I think, increased, and our entertainment was not only hospitable, but elegant. At night a minister's sister, in very fine brocade, sung Erse songs; I wished to know the meaning; but the Highlanders are not much used to scholastic questions, and no translations could be obtained.

Next day, Sept. 8th, the weather allowed us to depart; a good boat was provided us, and we went to Raarsa under the conduct of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman who conducted Prince Charles through the mountains in his distresses. The Prince, he says, was more active than himself; they were, at least, one night without any shelter.

The wind blew enough to give the boat a kind of dancing agitation, and in about three or four hours we arrived at Raarsa, where we were met by the laird and his friends upon the shore. Raarsa, for such is his title, is master of two islands: upon the smaller of which, called Rona, he has only flocks and herds. Rona gives title to his eldest son. The money which he raises annually by rent from all his dominions, which contain at least fifty thousand acres, is not believed to exceed two hundred and fifty pounds: but as he keeps a large farm in his own hands, he sells every year great numbers of cattle, which adds to his revenue, and his table is furnished from the farm and from the sea with very little expense, except for those things this country does not produce, and of those he is very liberal. The wine circulates vigorously; and the tea, chocolate, and coffee, however they are got, are always at hand. I am, &c.

We are this morning trying to get out of Skie.

LETTER XXIII.—To the Same.

Skie, Sept. 24th, 1773.

Dear Madam,

I am still in Skie. Do you remember the song?

> Every island is a prison,
> Strongly guarded by the sea.

We have at one time no boat, and at another may have too much wind; but of our reception here we have no reason to complain. We are now with Colonel Macleod, in a more pleasant place than I thought Skie could afford. Now to the narrative.

We were received at Raarsa on the sea-side, and after clambering with some difficulty over the rocks, a labour which the traveller, wherever he reposes himself on land, must in these islands be contented to endure; we were introduced into the house which one of the company called the Court of Raarsa, with politeness which not the Court of Versailles could have thought defective. The house is not large, though we were told in our passage that it had eleven fine rooms, nor magnificently furnished, but our utensils were most commonly of silver. We went up into a dining room, about as large as

your blue room, where we had something given us to eat, and tea and coffee.

Raarsa himself is a man of no inelegant appearance, and of manners uncommonly refined. Lady Raarsa makes no very sublime appearance for a sovereign, but is a good housewife, and a very prudent and diligent conductress of her family. Miss Flora Macleod is a celebrated beauty; has been admired at Edinburgh; dresses her head very high; and has manners so lady-like, that I wish her head-dress was lower. The rest of the nine girls are all pretty; the youngest is between Queeney and Lucy. The youngest boy, of four years old, runs barefoot, and wandered with us over the rocks to see a mill: I believe he would walk on that rough ground, without shoes, ten miles in a day.

The Laird of Raarsa has sometimes disputed the chieftainry of the clan with Macleod of Skie, but being much inferior in extent of possessions, has, I suppose, been forced to desist. Raarsa and its provinces have descended to its present possessor through a succession of four hundred years, without any increase or diminution. It was indeed lately in danger of forfeiture, but the old laird joined some prudence with his zeal, and, when Prince Charles landed in Scotland, made over his estate to his son, the present laird, and led one hundred men of Raarsa into the field, with officers of his own family. Eighty-six only came back after the last battle. The prince was hidden, in his distress, two nights at Raarsa, and the king's troops burnt the whole country, and killed some of the cattle.

You may guess at the opinions that prevail in this country; they are, however, content with fighting for their king; they do not drink for him. We had no foolish healths. At night, unexpectedly to us who were strangers, the carpet was taken up; the fiddler of the family came up, and a very vigorous and general dance was begun. As I told you, we were two-and-thirty at supper; there were full as many dancers; for, though all who supped did not dance, some danced of the young people who did not sup. Raarsa himself danced with his children, and old Malcolm, in his philibeg, was as nimble as when he led the Prince over the mountains. When they had danced themselves weary, two tables were spread, and I suppose at least twenty dishes were upon them. In this country some preparations of milk are always served up at supper, and sometimes in the place of tarts at dinner. The table was not coarsely heaped, but at once plentiful and elegant. They do not pretend to make a loaf; there are only cakes, commonly of oats or barley, but they made me very nice cakes of wheat flour. I always sat at the left hand of Lady Raarsa; and young Macleod of Skie, the chieftain of the clan, sat on the right.

After supper a young lady, who was visiting, sung Erse songs, in which Lady Raarsa joined prettily enough, but not gracefully; the young ladies sustained the chorus better. They are very little used to be asked questions, and not well prepared with answers. When one of the songs was over, I asked the princess that sat next to me, *What is that about?* I question if she conceived that I did not understand it. For the entertainment of the company, said she. But, Madam, what is the meaning of it? It is a love song. This was all the intelligence that I could obtain; nor have I been able to procure the translation of a single line of Erse.

At twelve it was bed-time. I had a chamber to myself, which, in eleven rooms to forty people, was more than my share. How the company and the family were distributed is not easy to tell. Macleod the chieftain, and Boswell, and I, had all single chambers on the first floor. There remained eight rooms only for at least seven and thirty lodgers. I suppose they put up temporary beds in the dining room, where they stowed all the young ladies. There was a room above stairs with six beds, in which they put ten men. The rest in my next.

LETTER XXIV.—To the Same.

Ostich in Skie, Sept 30th, 1773.

Dearest Madam,

I am still confined in Skie. We were unskilful travellers, and imagined that the sea was an open road, which we could pass at pleasure; but we have now learned, with some pain, that we may still wait for a long time the caprices of the equinoctial winds, and sit reading or writing, as I now do, while the tempest is rolling the sea, or roaring in the mountains. I am now no longer pleased with the delay; you can hear from me but seldom, and I cannot at all hear from you. It comes into my mind that some evil may happen, or that I might be of use while I am away. But these thoughts are vain; the wind is violent and adverse, and our boat cannot yet come. I must content myself with writing to you, and hoping that you will some time receive my letter. Now to my narrative.

Sept. 9th. Having passed the night as is usual, I rose, and found the dining-room full of company; we feasted and talked, and when the evening came it brought music and dancing. Young Macleod, the great proprietor of Skie and head of his clan, was very distinguishable; a young man of nineteen; bred awhile at St. Andrew's and afterwards at Oxford, a pupil of G. Strahan. He is a young man of a mind as much advanced as I have ever known; very elegant of manners, and very graceful in his person. He has the full spirit of a feudal chief; and I was very ready to accept his invitation to Dunvegan. All Raarsa's children are beautiful. The ladies all, except the eldest, are in the morning dressed in their hair. The true Highlander never wears more than a ribband on her head till she is married.

On the third day, Boswell went out with old Malcolm to see a ruined castle, which he found less entire than was promised, but he saw the country. I did not go, for the castle was perhaps ten miles off, and there is no riding at Raarsa, the whole island being rock or mountain, from which the cattle often fall and are destroyed. It is very barren, and maintains, as near as I could collect, about seven hundred inhabitants, perhaps ten to a square mile. In these countries you are not to suppose that you shall find villages or inclosures. The traveller wanders through a naked desert, gratified sometimes, but rarely, with the sight of cows, and now and then finds a heap of loose stones and turf in a cavity between rocks, where a being born with all those

powers which education expands, and all those sensations which culture refines, is condemned to shelter itself from the wind and rain. Philosophers there are, who try to make themselves believe that this life is happy, but they believe it only while they are saying it, and never yet produced conviction in a single mind; he, whom want of words or images sunk into silence, still thought, as he thought before, that privation of pleasure can never please, and that content is not to be much envied, when it has no other principle than ignorance of good.

This gloomy tranquillity, which some may call fortitude, and others wisdom, was, I believe, for a long time to be very frequently found in these dens of poverty: every man was content to live like his neighbours, and never wandering from home, saw no mode of life preferable to his own, except at the house of the laird, or the laird's nearest relations, whom he considered as a superior order of beings, to whose luxuries or honours he had no pretensions. But the end of this reverence and submission seems now approaching; the Highlanders have learned that there are countries less bleak and barren than their own, where, instead of working for the laird, every man will till his own ground, and eat the produce of his own labour. Great numbers have been induced by this discovery to go every year, for some time past, to America. Macdonald and Macleod of Skie have lost many tenants and many labourers, but Raarsa has not yet been forsaken by a single inhabitant.

Rona is yet more rocky and barren than Raarsa, and though it contains perhaps four thousand acres, is possessed only by a herd of cattle and the keepers.

I find myself not very able to walk upon the mountains, but one day I went out to see the walls yet standing of an ancient chapel. In almost every island the superstitious votaries of the Romish church erected places of worship, in which the drones of convents or cathedrals performed the holy offices; but by the active zeal of Protestant devotion, almost all of them have sunk into ruin. The chapel at Raarsa is now only considered as the burying-place of the family, and I suppose of the whole island.

We would now have gone away and left room for others to enjoy the pleasures of this little court; but the wind detained us till the 12th, when, though it was Sunday, we thought it proper to snatch the opportunity of a calm day. Raarsa accompanied us in a six-oared boat, which he said was his coach and six. It is indeed the vehicle in which the ladies take the air and pay their visits, but they have taken very little care for accommodations. There is no way in or out of the boat for a woman, but by being carried; and in the boat thus dignified with a pompous name, there is no seat but an occasional bundle of straw. Thus we left Raarsa; the seat of plenty, civility, and cheerfulness.

We dined at a public house at Port Re; so called because one of the Scottish kings landed there in a progress through the Western isles. Raarsa paid the reckoning privately. We then got on horseback, and by a short but very tedious journey came to Kingsburgh, at which the same king lodged after he landed. Here I had the honour of saluting the far-famed Miss Flora Macdonald, who conducted the Prince dressed as her maid, through the English forces from the island of Lewes; and, when she came to Skie, dined with the English officers, and left her maid below. She must then have been a very young lady; she is now not old: of a pleasing person and elegant behaviour. She told me that she thought herself honoured by my visit; and I am sure that whatever regard she bestowed on me was liberally repaid. "If thou likest her opinions, thou wilt praise her virtue." She was carried to London, but dismissed without a trial, and came down with Malcolm Macleod, against whom sufficient evidence could not be procured. She and her husband are poor, and are going to try their fortune in America.

Sic rerum volvitur orbis.

At Kingsburgh we were very liberally feasted, and I slept in the bed in which the Prince reposed in his distress; the sheets which he used were never put to any meaner offices, but were wrapped up by the lady of the house, and at last, according to her desire, were laid round her in her grave. These are not Whigs.

On the 13th, travelling partly on horseback where we could not row, and partly on foot where we could not ride, we came to Dunvegan, which I have described already. Here, though poor Macleod had been left by his grandfather overwhelmed with debts, we had another exhibition of feudal hospitality. There were two stags in the house, and venison came to the table every day in its various forms. Macleod, besides his estate in Skie, larger I suppose than some English counties, is proprietor of nine inhabited isles: and of his islands uninhabited I doubt if he very exactly knows the number. I told him that he was a mighty monarch. Such dominions fill an Englishman with envious wonder; but when he surveys the naked mountains, and treads the quaking moor, and wanders over the wild regions of gloomy barrenness, his wonder may continue, but his envy ceases. The unprofitableness of these vast domains can be conceived only by the means of positive instances. The heir of *Col*, an island not far distant, has lately told me how wealthy he should be if he could let *Rum*, another of his islands, for two-pence halfpenny an acre; and Macleod has an estate, which the surveyor reports to contain eighty thousand acres, rented at six hundred pounds a-year.

While we were at Dunvegan, the wind was high, and the rain violent, so that we were not able to put forth a boat to fish in the sea, or to visit the adjacent islands, which may be seen from the house; but we filled up the time as we could, sometimes by talk, sometimes by reading. I have never wanted books in the Isle of Skie.

We were invited one day by the Laird and Lady of Muck, one of the Western islands, two miles long and three quarters of a mile high. He has half his island in his own culture, and upon the other half live one hundred and fifty dependants, who not only live upon the product, but export corn sufficient for the payment of their rent.

Lady Macleod has a son and four daughters; they have lived long in England, and have the language and manners of English ladies. We lived with them very easily. The hospitality of this remote region is like that of the golden age.

We have found ourselves treated at every house as if we came to confer a benefit.

We were eight days at Dunvegan, but we took the first opportunity which the weather afforded, after the first days, of going away, and, on the 21st, went to Ulinish, where we were well entertained, and wandered a little after curiosities. In the afternoon an interval of calm sunshine courted us out to see a cave on the shore famous for its echo. When we went into the boat, one of our companions was asked in Erse, by the boatmen, who they were that came with him? He gave us characters, I suppose, to our advantage, and was asked, in the spirit of the Highlands, whether I could recite a long series of ancestors? The boatmen said, as I perceived afterwards, that they heard the cry of an English ghost. This, Boswell says, disturbed him. We came to the cave, and clambering up the rocks, came to an arch, open at one end, one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty broad in the broadest part, and about thirty high. There was no echo: such is the fidelity of report; but I saw what I never saw before, muscles and whilks in their natural state. There was another arch in the rock open at both ends.

Sept. 23d. We removed to Talisker, a house occupied by Mr. Macleod a lieutenant-colonel in the Dutch service. Talisker has been long in the possession of gentlemen, and therefore has a garden well cultivated: and, what is here very rare, is shaded by trees: a place where the imagination is more amused cannot easily be found. The mountains about it are of great height, with waterfalls succeeding one another so fast, that as one ceases to be heard another begins. Between the mountains there is a small valley extending to the sea, which is not far off, beating upon a coast very difficult of access.

Two nights before our arrival two boats were driven upon this coast by the tempest, one of them had a pilot that knew the passage, the second followed but a third missed the true course, and was driven forward with great danger of being forced into the vast ocean, but however gained at last some other island. The crews crept to Talisker, almost lifeless with wet, cold, fatigue, and terror, but the lady took care of them. She is a woman of more than common qualifications; having travelled with her husband, she speaks four languages.

You find that all the islanders, even in these recesses of life, are not barbarous. One of the ministers who has adhered to us almost all the time is an excellent scholar. We have now with us the young laird of Col, who is heir, perhaps, to two hundred square miles of land. He has first studied at Aberdeen, and afterwards gone to Hertfordshire to learn agriculture, being much impressed with desire of improvement: he likewise has the notions of a chief, and keeps a piper. At Macleod's the bagpipe always played while we were dining.

Col has undertaken, by permission of the waves and wind, to carry us about several of the islands, with which he is acquainted enough to show us whatever curious is given by nature or left by antiquity; but we grew afraid of deviating from our way home, lest we should be shut up for months upon some little protuberance of rock, that just appears above the sea, and perhaps is scarcely marked upon a map.

You remember the Doge of Genoa, who being asked what struck him most at the French court? answered, "Myself." I cannot think many things here more likely to affect the fancy than to see Johnson ending his sixty-fourth year in the wilderness of the Hebrides. But now I am here, it will gratify me very little to return without seeing, or doing my best to see what those places afford. I have a desire to instruct myself in the whole system of pastoral life; but I know not whether I shall be able to perfect the idea. However, I have many pictures in my mind, which I could not have had without this journey, and should have passed it with great pleasure had you, and Master, and Queeney, been in the party. We should have excited the attention and enlarged the observation of each other, and obtained many pleasing topics of future conversation. As it is, I travel with my mind too much at home, and perhaps miss many things worthy of observation, or pass them with transient notice; so that the images, for want of that re-impression which discussion and comparison produce, easily fade away; but I keep a book of remarks, and Boswell writes a regular journal of our travels, which, I think, contains as much of what I say and do, as of all other occurrences together; "for such a faithful chronicler as Griffith."

I hope, dearest Madam, you are equally careful to reposit proper memorials of all that happens to you and your family, and then when we meet we shall tell our stories. I wish you had gone this summer in your usual splendour to Brighthelmstone.

Mr. Thrale probably wonders how I live all this time without sending to him for money. Travelling in Scotland is dear enough, dearer in proportion to what the country affords than in England, but residence in the isles is unexpensive. Company is, I think, considered as a supply of pleasure, and a relief of that tediousness of life which is felt in every place, elegant or rude. Of wine and punch they are very liberal, for they get them cheap; but as there is no custom-house on the island, they can hardly be considered as smugglers. Their punch is made without lemons or any substitute.

Their tables are very plentiful; but a very nice man would not be pampered. As they have no meat but as they kill it, they are obliged to live while it lasts upon the same flesh. They kill a sheep, and set mutton boiled and roast on the table together. They have fish both of the sea and of the brooks: but they can hardly conceive that it requires any sauce. To sauce in general they are strangers: now and then butter is melted, but I dare not always take lest I should offend by disliking it. Barley-broth is a constant dish, and is made well in every house. A stranger, if he is prudent, will secure his share, for it is not certain that he will be able to eat any thing else.

Their meat, being often newly killed, is very tough, and, as nothing is sufficiently subdued by the fire, is not easily to be eaten. Carving is here a very laborious employment, for the knives are never whetted. Table-knives are not of long subsistence in the Highlands; every man, while arms were a regular part of dress, had his knife and fork appendant to his dirk. Knives they now lay upon the table, but the handles are apt

to show that they have been in other hands, and the bl..des have never brightness nor edge.

Of silver there is no want, and it will last long, for it is never cleaned. They are a nation just rising from barbarity: long contented with necessaries, now somewhat studious of convenience, but not yet arrived at delicate discriminations. Their linen is, however, both clean and fine. Bread, such as we mean by that name, I have never seen in the Isle of Skie. They have ovens, for they bake their pies; but they never ferment their meal, nor mould a loaf. Cakes of oats and barley are brought to the table, but I believe wheat is reserved for strangers. They are commonly too hard for me, and therefore I take potatoes to my meat, and am sure to find them on almost every table.

They retain so much of the pastoral life, that some preparation of milk is commonly one of the dishes both at dinner and supper. Tea is always drank at the usual times; but in the morning the table is polluted with a plate of slices of strong cheese. This is peculiar to the Highlands; at Edinburgh there are always honey and sweetmeats on the morning tea-table.

Strong liquors they seem to love. Every man, perhaps woman, begins the day with a dram; and the punch is made both at dinner and supper.

They have neither wood nor coal for fuel, but burn peat or turf in their chimneys. It is dug out of the moors or mosses, and makes a strong and lasting fire, not always very sweet, and somewhat apt to smoke the pot.

The houses of inferior gentlemen are very small, and every room serves many purposes. In the bed-rooms, perhaps, are laid up stores of different kinds; and the parlour of the day is a bed-room at night. In the room which I inhabited last, about fourteen feet square, there were three chests of drawers, a long chest for larger clothes, two closet cupboards, and the bed. Their rooms are commonly dirty, of which they seem to have little sensibility, and if they had more, clean floors would be difficultly kept, where the first step from the door is into the dirt. They are very much inclined to carpets, and seldom fail to lay down something under their feet, better or worse, as they happen to be furnished.

The Highland dress, being forbidden by law, is very little used; sometimes it may be seen, but the English traveller is struck with nothing so much as the *nudite des pieds* of the common people.

Skie is the greatest island, or the greatest but one, among the Hebrides. Of the soil I have already given some account: it is generally barren, but some spots are not wholly unfruitful. The gardens have apples and pears, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, currants, and gooseberries, but all the fruit that I have seen is small. They attempt to sow nothing but oats and barley. Oats constitute the bread corn of the place. Their harvest is about the beginning of October; and being so late, is very much subject to disappointments from the rains that follow the equinox. This year has been particularly disastrous. Their rainy season lasts from Autumn to Spring. They have seldom very hard frosts; nor was it ever known that a lake was covered with ice strong enough to bear a skaiter. The sea round them is always open. The snow falls but soon melts; only in 1771, they had a cold spring, in which the island was so long covered with it, that many beasts, both wild and domestic, perished, and the whole country was reduced to distress, from which I know not if it is even yet recovered.

The animals here are not remarkably small; perhaps they recruit their breed from the main land. The cows are sometimes without horns. The horned and unhorned cattle are not accidental variations, but different species: they will, however, breed together.

October 3d. The wind is now changed, and if we snatch the moment of opportunity, an escape from this island is become practicable; I have no reason to complain of my reception, yet I long to be again at home.

You and my master may perhaps expect, after this description of Skie, some account of myself. My eye is, I am afraid, not fully recovered; my ears are not mended; my nerves seem to grow weaker, and I have been otherwise not as well as I sometimes am, but think myself lately better. This climate, perhaps, is not within my degree of healthy latitude.

Thus I have given my most honoured mistress the story of me and my little ramble. We are now going to some other isle, to what we know not; the wind will tells us. I am, &c."

LETTER XXV.—To the Same.

Mull, Oct. 15th, 1773

Dear Madam,

Though I have written to Mr. Thrale, yet having a little more time than was promised me, I would not suffer the messenger to go without some token of my duty to my mistress, who, I suppose, expects the usual tribute of intelligence, a tribute which I am not now very able to pay.

October 3d. After having been detained by storms many days in Skie, we left it, as we thought, with a fair wind; but a violent gust, which Bos. had a great mind to call a tempest, forced us into *Col*, an obscure island; on which

——— nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura.

There is literally no tree upon the island, part of it is a sandy waste, over which it would be really dangerous to travel in dry weather and with a high wind. It seems to be little more than one continued rock, covered from space to space with a thin layer of earth. It is, however, according to the Highland notion, very populous, and life is improved beyond the manners of Skie; for the huts are collected into little villages, and every one has a small garden of roots and cabbage. The laird has a new house built by his uncle, and an old castle inhabited by his ancestors. The young laird entertained us very liberally; he is heir, perhaps, to three hundred square miles of land, which at ten shillings an acre, would bring him ninety-six thousand pounds a year. He is desirous of improving the agriculture of his country; and in imitation of the Czar, travelled for improvement, and worked with his own hands upon a farm in Hertfordshire in the neighbourhood of your uncle Sir Thomas Salusbury. He talks of doing useful things, and has introduced turnips for winter fodder. He has made a small essay towards a road.

Col is but a barren place. Description has here few opportunities of spreading her colours. The difference of day and night is the only vicissitude. The succession of sunshine to rain, or of calms to tempests, we have not known; wind and rain have been our only weather.

At last, after about nine days, we hired a sloop; and having lain in it all night, with such accommodations as these miserable vessels can afford, were landed yesterday on the Isle of Mull; from which we expect an easy passage into Scotland. I am sick in a ship, but recover by lying down.

I have not good health; I do not find that travelling much helps me. My nights are flatulent, though not in the utmost degree, and I have a weakness in my knees, which makes me very unable to walk.

Pray, dear Madam, let me have a long letter. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.—To the Same.

Inverary, Oct. 24th, 1773.

Honoured Mistress,

My last letters to you and my dear master were written from Mull, the third island of the Hebrides in extent. There is no post, and I took the opportunity of a gentleman's passage to the main land.

In Mull we were confined two days by the weather; on the third we got on horseback, and after a journey difficult and tedious, over rocks naked and valleys untracked, through a country of barrenness and solitude, we came, almost in the dark, to the sea-side, weary and dejected, having met with nothing but water falling from the mountains that could raise any image of delight. Our company was the young Laird of Col and his servant. Col made every Maclean open his house where he came, and supply us with horses when we departed; but the horses of this country are small, and I was not mounted to my wish.

At the sea-side we found the ferry-boat departed; if it had been where it was expected, the wind was against us, and the hour was late, nor was it very desirable to cross the sea in darkness with a small boat. The captain of a sloop that had been driven thither by the storm, saw our distress, and as we were hesitating and deliberating, sent his boat, which, by Col's order, transported us to the Isle of Ulva. We were introduced to Mr. Macquarry, the head of a small clan, whose ancestors have reigned in Ulva beyond memory, but who has reduced himself by his negligence and folly, to the necessity of selling this venerable patrimony.

On the next morning we passed the strait of Inch Kenneth, an island about a mile in length, and less than half a mile broad; in which Kenneth, a Scottish saint, established a small clerical college, of which the chapel walls are still standing. At this place I beheld a scene which I wish you and my master and Queeney had partaken.

The only family on the island is that of Sir Allan, the chief of the ancient and numerous clan of Maclean; the clan which claims the second place, yielding only to Macdonald in the line of battle. Sir Allan, a chieftain, a baronet, and a soldier, inhabits in this insulated desert a thatched hut with no chambers. Young Col, who owns him as his chief, and whose cousin was his lady, had, I believe, given him some notice of our visit; he received us with a soldier's frankness and the gentleman's elegance, and introduced us to his daughters, two young ladies who have not wanted education suitable to their birth, and who, in their cottage, neither forgot their dignity, nor affected to remember it. Do not you wish to have been with us?

Sir Allan's affairs are in disorder by the fault of his ancestors: and while he forms some scheme for retrieving them, he has retreated hither.

When our salutations were over, he showed us the island. We walked uncovered into the chapel, and saw in the reverend ruin the effects of precipitate reformation. The floor is covered with ancient grave-stones of which the inscriptions are not now legible; and without, some of the chief families still continue the right of sepulture. The altar is not yet quite demolished; beside it, on the right side, is a bas-relief of the Virgin with her child, and an angel hovering over her. On the other side still stands a hand-bell, which, though it has no clapper, neither Presbyterian bigotry, nor barbarian wantonness has yet taken away. The chapel is thirty-eight feet long, and eighteen broad. Boswell, who is very pious, went into it at night, to perform his devotions, but came back in haste for fear of spectres. Near the chapel is a fountain, to which the water, remarkably pure, is conveyed from a distant hill, through pipes laid by the Romish clergy, which still perform the office of conveyance, though they have never been repaired since Popery was suppressed.

We soon after went in to dinner, and wanted neither the comforts nor the elegancies of life. There were several dishes, and variety of liquors. The servants live in another cottage, in which, I suppose, the meat is dressed.

Towards evening, Sir Allan told us, that Sunday never passed over him like another day. One of the ladies read, and read very well, the evening service;—and Paradise was opened in the wild.

Next day, 18th, we went and wandered among the rocks on the shore, while the boat was busy in catching oysters, of which there is a great bed. Oysters lie upon the sand, one, I think, sticking to another, and cockles are found a few inches under the sand.

We then went in the boat to Sondiland, a little island very near. We found it a wild rock, of about ten acres; part naked, part covered with sand, out of which we picked shells; and part clothed with a thin layer of mould, on the grass of which a few sheep are sometimes fed. We then came back and dined. I passed part of the afternoon in reading, and in the evening one of the ladies played on her harpsichord, and Boswell and Col danced a reel with the other.

On the 19th, we persuaded Sir Allan to launch his boat again, and go with us to Icolmkill, where the first great preacher of Christianity to the Scots built a church and settled a monastery. In our way we stopped to examine a very uncommon cave on the coast of Mull. We had some difficulty to make our way over the vast masses of broken rocks that lie before the entrance,

and at the mouth were embarrassed with stones, which the sea had accumulated, as at Brighthelmstone; but as we advanced, we reached a floor of soft sand, and as we left the light behind us, walked along a very spacious cavity, vaulted over head with an arch almost regular, by which a mountain was sustained, at least a very lofty rock. From this magnificent cavern went a narrow passage to the right hand, which we entered with a candle, and though it was obstructed with great stones, clambered over them to a second expansion of the cave, in which there lies a great square stone, which might serve as a table. The air here was very warm, but not oppressive, and the flame of the candle continued pyramidal. The cave goes onward to an unknown extent, but we were now one hundred and sixty yards under ground; we had but one candle, and had never heard of any that went farther and came back; we therefore thought it prudent to return.

Going forward in our boat, we came to a cluster of rocks, black and horrid, which Sir Allan chose for the place where he would eat his dinner. We climbed till we got seats. The stores were opened, and the repast taken.

We then entered the boat again; the night came upon us; the wind rose; the sea swelled; and Boswell desired to be set on dry ground: we, however, pursued our navigation, and passed by several little islands in the silent solemnity of faint moonshine, seeing little, and hearing only the wind and the water. At last we reached the island, the venerable seat of ancient sanctity; where secret piety reposed, and where fallen greatness was reposited. The island has no house of entertainment, and we manfully made our bed in a farmer's barn. The description I hope to give you another time. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.—To the Same.

Edinburgh, Nov. 12th, 1773.

Dearest Madam,

Among the possibilities of evil which my imagination suggested at this distance, I missed that which has really happened. I never had much hope of a will in your favour, but was willing to believe that no will would have been made. The event is now irrevocable: it remains only to bear it. Not to wish it had been different is impossible; but as the wish is painful without use, it is not prudent, perhaps not lawful to indulge it. As life, and vigour of mind, and sprightliness of imagination, and flexibility of attention are given us for valuable and useful purposes, we must not think ourselves at liberty to squander life, to enervate intellectual strength, to cloud our thoughts, or fix our attention, when by all this expense we know that no good can be produced. Be alone as little as you can; when you are alone, do not suffer your thoughts to dwell on what you might have done to prevent this disappointment. You perhaps could not have done what you imagine, or might have done it without effect. But even to think in the most reasonable manner, is for the present not so useful as not to think. Remit yourself solemnly into the hands of God, and then turn your mind upon the business and amusements which lie before you. "All is best," says Chene, "as it has been, excepting the errors of our own free will." Burton concludes his long book upon Melancholy with this important precept: "Be not solitary; be not idle." Remember Chene's position, and observe Burton's precept.

We came hither on the 9th of this month. I long to come under your care, but for some days cannot decently get away. They congratulate our return as if we had been with Phipps or Banks; I am ashamed of their salutations.

I have been able to collect very little for Queeney's cabinet; but she will not want toys now, she is so well employed. I wish her success; and am not without some thought of becoming her schoolfellow. I have got an Italian Rasselas.

Surely my dear Lucy will recover; I wish I could do her good. I love her very much; and should love another godchild, if I might have the honour of standing to the next baby. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.—To the Same.

Edinburgh, Nov. 18th, 1773.

My Dearest Mistress,

This is the last letter that I shall write; while you are reading it, I shall be coming home.

I congratulate you upon your boy; but you must not think that I will love him all at once as well as I love Harry, for Harry you know is so rational. I shall love him by degrees.

Poor, pretty, dear Lucy! Can nothing do her good? I am sorry to lose her. But if she must be taken from us, let us resign her with confidence into the hands of Him who knows, and who only knows, what is best both for us and her.

Do not suffer yourself to be dejected. Resolution and diligence will supply all that is wanting, and all that is lost. But if your health should be impaired, I know not where to find a substitute. I shall have no mistress; Mr. Thrale will have no wife, and the little flock will have no mother.

I long to be home, and have taken a place in the coach for Monday; I hope, therefore, to be in London on Friday the 26th, in the evening. Please to let Mrs. Williams know. I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.—To the Same.

Litchfield, June 23d, 1775.

Dear Madam,

Now I hope you are thinking, shall I have a letter to-day from Litchfield? Something of a letter you will have; how else can I expect that you should write? and the morning on which I should miss a letter would be a morning of uneasiness, notwithstanding all that would be said or done by the sisters of Stowhill, who do and say whatever good they can. They give me good words, and cherries, and strawberries. Lady * * * * and her mother and sister were visiting there yesterday, and Lady * * * * took her tea before her mother.

Mrs. Cobb is to come to Miss Porter's this afternoon. Miss A——— comes little near me. Mr. Langley, of Ashbourne, was here to-day, in his way to Birmingham, and every body talks of you.

The ladies of the Amicable Society are to walk in a few days, from the town-hall to the cathedral in procession, to hear a sermon. They walk in linen gowns, and each has a stick with an acorn, but for the acorn they could give no reason, till I told them of the civic crown.

I have just had your sweet letter, and am glad that you are to be at the Regatta. You know how little I love to have you left out of any shining part of life. You have every right to distinction, and should therefore be distinguished. You will see a show with philosophic superiority, and therefore may see it safely. It is easy to talk of sitting at home contented when others are seeing or making shows. But not to have been where it is supposed, and seldom supposed falsely, that all would go if they could; to be able to say nothing when every one is talking; to have no opinion when every one is judging; to hear exclamations of rapture, without power to depress; to listen to falsehoods without right to contradict, is, after all, a state of temporary inferiority, in which the mind is rather hardened by stubbornness, than supported by fortitude. If the world be worth winning, let us enjoy it; if it is to be despised, let us despise it by conviction. But the world is not to be despised, but as it is compared with something better. Company is in itself better than solitude, and pleasure better than indolence. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, says the moral as well as the natural philosopher. By doing nothing, and by knowing nothing, no power of doing good can be obtained. He must mingle with the world that desires to be useful. Every new scene impresses new ideas, enriches the imagination, and enlarges the power of reason, by new topics of comparison. You that have seen the Regatta will have images which we who miss it must want, and no intellectual images are without use. But when you are in this scene of splendour and gayety, do not let one of your fits of negligence steal upon you. *Hoc age*, is the great rule, whether you are serious or merry: whether you are stating the expenses of your family, learning science or duty from a folio, or floating on the Thames in a fancied dress. Of the whole entertainment let me not hear so copious nor so true an account from any body as from you. I am, dearest Madam, your, &c.

LETTER XXX.—To the Same.

Ashbourne.

Dearest Madam,

I am sure I write and write, and every letter that comes from you charges me with not writing. Since I wrote to Queeney I have written twice to you, on the 6th and the 9th: be pleased to let me know whether you have them or have them not. That of the 6th you should regularly have had on the 8th, yet your letter of the 9th seems not to mention it; all this puzzles me.

Poor dear ****! He only grows dull because he is sickly; age has not yet begun to impair him; nor is he such a chameleon as to take immediately the colour of his company. When you see him again, you will find him reanimated. Most men have their bright and their cloudy days; at least they have days when they put their powers into action, and days when they suffer them to repose.

Fourteen thousand pounds make a sum sufficient for the establishment of a family, and which, in whatever flow of riches or confidence of prosperity, deserves to be very seriously considered. I hope a great part of it has paid debts, and no small part bought land. As for gravelling and walling and digging, though I am not much delighted with them, yet something, indeed much, must be allowed to every man's taste. He that is growing rich has a right to enjoy part of the growth his own way. I hope to range in the walk, and row upon the water, and devour fruit from the wall.

Dr. Taylor wants to be gardening. He means to buy a piece of ground in the neighbourhood, and surround it with a wall, and build a gardener's house upon it, and have fruit, and be happy. Much happiness it will not bring him; but what can he do better? If I had money enough, what would I do? Perhaps, if you and master did not hold me, I might go to Cairo, and down the Red Sea to Bengal, and take a ramble in India. Would this be better than building and planting? It would surely give more variety to the eye, and more amplitude to the mind. Half fourteen thousand would send me out to see other forms of existence, and bring me back to describe them.

I answer this the day on which I had yours of the 9th, that is on the 11th. Let me know when it comes. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXI.—To the Same.

Litchfield, Aug. 2d, 1775

Madam,

I dined to-day at Stowhill, and am come away to write my letter. Never surely was I such a writer before. Do you keep my letters? I am not of your opinion that I shall not like to read them hereafter; for though there is in them not much history of mind, or any thing else, they will, I hope, always be in some degree the records of a pure and blameless friendship, and, in some hours of languor and sadness, may revive the memory of more cheerful times.

Why you should suppose yourself not desirous hereafter to read the history of your own mind, I do not see. Twelve years, on which you now look as on a vast expanse of life, will probably be passed over uniformly and smoothly, with very little perception of your progress, and with very few remarks upon the way. The accumulation of knowledge which you promise to yourself, by which the future is to look back upon the present, with the superiority of manhood to infancy, will perhaps never be attempted, or never will be made; and you will find, as millions have found before you, that forty-five has made little sensible addition to thirty-three.

As the body after a certain time gains no increase of height, and little of strength, there is likewise a period, though more variable by external causes, when the mind commonly attains its stationary point, and very little advances its

powers of reflection, judgment, and ratiocination. The body may acquire new modes of motion, or new dexterities of mechanic operations, but its original strength receives not improvement: the mind may be stored with new languages, or new sciences, but its power of thinking remains nearly the same, and unless it attains new subjects of meditation, it commonly produces thoughts of the same force and the same extent, at very distant intervals of life; as the tree, unless a foreign fruit be ingrafted, gives year after year productions of the same form and the same flavour.

By intellectual force or strength of thought is meant the degree of power which the mind possesses of surveying the subject of meditation, with its circuit of concomitants, and its train of dependence.

Of this power, which all observe to be very different in different minds, part seems the gift of nature, and part the acquisition of experience. When the powers of nature have attained their intended energy, they can be no more advanced. The shrub can never become a tree. And it is not unreasonable to suppose that they are before the middle of life in their full vigour.

Nothing then remains but practice and experience; and perhaps why they do so little, may be worth inquiry.

But I have just now looked, and find it so late, that I will inquire against the next post-night. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.—To the Same.

Litchfield, Aug. 5th, 1775.

Dear Madam,

Instead of forty reasons for my return, one is sufficient,—that you wish for my company. I purpose to write no more till you see me. The ladies at Stowhill and Greenhill are unanimously of opinion, that it will be best to take a post-chaise, and not to be troubled with the vexations of a common carriage. I will venture to suppose the ladies at Streatham to be of the same mind.

You will now expect to be told why you will not be so much wiser as you expect, when you have lived twelve years longer.

It is said, and said truly, that experience is the best teacher; and it is supposed, that as life is lengthened experience is increased. But a closer inspection of human life will discover that time often passes without any incident which can much enlarge knowledge or ratify judgment. When we are young we learn much, because we are universally ignorant; we observe every thing, because every thing is new. But after some years, the occurrences of daily life are exhausted; one day passes like another, in the same scene of appearances, in the same course of transactions; we have to do what we have often done, and what we do not try, because we do not wish to do much better; we are told what we already know, and therefore what repetition cannot make us know with greater certainty.

He that has early learned much perhaps seldom makes, with regard to life and manners, much addition to his knowledge: not only because as more is known there is less to learn, but because a mind stored with images and principles turns inwards for its own entertainment, and is employed in settling those ideas which run into confusion, and in recollecting those which are stealing away; practices by which wisdom may be kept, but not gained. The merchant who was at first busy in acquiring money, ceases to grow richer, from the time when he makes it his business only to count it.

Those who have families or employments are engaged in business of little difficulty, but of great importance, requiring rather assiduity of practice than subtilty of speculation, occupying the attention with images too bulky for refinement, and too obvious for research. The right is already known: what remains is only to follow it. Daily business adds no more to wisdom, than daily lesson to the learning of the teacher. But of how few lives does not stated duty claim the greater part?

Far the greater part of human minds never endeavour their own improvement. Opinions once received from instruction, or settled by whatever accident, are seldom recalled to examination; having been once supposed to be right, they are never discovered to be erroneous, for no application is made of any thing that time may present, either to shake or to confirm them. From this acquiescence in preconceptions none are wholly free; between fear of uncertainty, and dislike of labour, every one rests while he might yet go forward; and they that were wise at thirty-three, are very little wiser at forty-five.

Of this speculation you are perhaps tired, and would rather hear of Sophy. I hope before this comes, that her head will be easier, and your head less filled with fears and troubles, which you know are to be indulged only to prevent evil, not to increase it.

Your uneasiness about Sophy is probably unnecessary, and at worst your own children are healthful, and your affairs prosperous. Unmingled good cannot be expected; but as we may lawfully gather all the good within our reach, we may be allowed to lament after that which we lose. I hope your losses are at an end, and that as far as the condition of our present existence permits, your remaining life will be happy.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.—To the Same.

Litchfield, March 25th, 1776.

Dear Madam,

This letter will not, I hope, reach you many days before me; in a distress which can be so little relieved, nothing remains for a friend but to come and partake it.

Poor dear sweet little boy! When I read the letter this day to Mrs. Aston, she said, "Such a death is the next to translation." Yet however I may convince myself of this, the tears are in my eyes, and yet I could not love him as you loved him, nor reckon upon him for a future comfort as you and his father reckoned upon him.

He is gone, and we are going! We could not have enjoyed him long, and shall not long be separated from him. He has probably escaped many such pangs as you are now feeling.

Nothing remains, but that with humble confidence we resign ourselves to Almighty Good

ness, and fall down, without irreverent murmurs, before the Sovereign Distributor of good and evil, with hope that though sorrow endureth for a night, yet joy may come in the morning.

I have known you, Madam, too long to think that you want any arguments for submission to the Supreme Will; nor can my consolation have any effect but that of showing that I wish to comfort you. What can be done you must do for yourself. Remember first, that your child is happy; and then, that he is safe, not only from the ills of this world, but from those more formidable dangers which extend their mischief to eternity. You have brought into the world a rational being; have seen him happy during the little life that has been granted him; and can have no doubt but that his happiness is now permanent and immutable.

When you have obtained by prayer such tranquillity as nature will admit, force your attention, as you can, upon your accustomed duties and accustomed entertainments. You can do no more for our dear boy, but you must not therefore think less on those whom your attention may make fitter for the place to which he is gone. I am, dearest, dearest Madam, your most affectionate humble servant.

LETTER XXXIV.—To the Same.

Sept. 6th, 1777.

Dearest Lady,

It is true that I have loitered, and what is worse, loitered with very little pleasure. The time has run away, as most time runs, without account, without use, and without memorial. But to say this of a few weeks, though not pleasing, might be borne, but what ought to be the regret of him who, in a few days, will have so nearly the same to say of sixty-eight years? But complaint is vain.

If you have nothing to say from the neighbourhood of the metropolis, what can occur to me in little cities and petty towns; in places which we have both seen, and of which no description is wanted? I have left part of the company with which you dined here, to come and write this letter; in which I have nothing to tell, but that my nights are very tedious. I cannot persuade myself to forbear trying something.

As you have now little to do, I suppose you are pretty diligent at the Thraliana; and a very curious collection posterity will find it. Do not remit the practice of writing down occurrences as they arise, of whatever kind, and be very punctual in annexing the dates. Chronology, you know, is the eye of history; and every man's life is of importance to himself. Do not omit painful casualties, or unpleasing passages; they make the variegation of existence; and there are many transactions, of which I will not promise with Æneas, *et hæc olim meminisse juvabit*. Yet that remembrance which is not pleasant may be useful. There is however an intemperate attention to slight circumstances which is to be avoided, lest a great part of life be spent in writing the history of the rest. Every day perhaps has something to be noted, but in a settled and uniform course few days can have much.

Why do I write all this, which I had no thought of when I began? The Thraliana drove it all into my head. It deserves however an hour's reflection, to consider how, with the least loss of time, the loss of what we wish to retain may be prevented.

Do not neglect to write to me, for when a post comes empty, I am really disappointed.

Boswell, I believe, will meet me here. I am, dearest lady, your, &c.

LETTER XXXV.—To the Same.

Litchfield, Oct. 3d, 1777

Dear Madam,

This is the last time that I shall write, in this excursion, from this place. To-morrow I shall be, I hope, at Birmingham; from which place I shall do my best to find the nearest way home. I come home, I think, worse than I went; and do not like the state of my health. But, *vive hodie*, make the most of life. I hope to get better, and—sweep the cobwebs. But I have sad nights. Mrs. Aston has sent me to Mr. Greene to be cured.

Did you see Foote at Brighthelmstone?—Did you think he would so soon be gone?—Life, says Falstaff, is a shuttle. He was a fine fellow in his way; and the world is really impoverished by his sinking glories. Murphy ought to write his life, at least to give the world a Footeana. Now, will any of his contemporaries bewail him? Will genius change *his sex* to weep? I would really have his life written with diligence.

It will be proper for me to work pretty diligently now for some time. I hope to get through, though so many weeks have passed. Little lives and little criticisms may serve.

Having been in the country so long, with very little to detain me, I am rather glad to look homewards. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.—To the Same.

Oct. 13th, 1777

Dear Madam,

Yet I do love to hear from you. Such pretty kind letters as you send. But it gives me great delight to find that my master misses me. I begin to wish myself with you more than I should do, if I were wanted less. It is a good thing to stay away till one's company is desired, but not so good to stay after it is desired.

You know I have some work to do. I did not set to it very soon; and if I should go up to London with nothing done, what would be said, but that I was ——— who can tell what? I therefore stay till I can bring up something to stop their mouths, and then ———

Though I am still at Ashbourne, I receive your dear letters that come to Lichfield, and you may continue that direction, for I think to get thither as soon as I can.

One of the does died yesterday, and I am afraid her fawn will be starved; I wish Miss Thrale had it to nurse; but the doctor is now all for cattle, and minds very little either does or hens.

How did you and your aunt part? Did you turn her out of doors to begin your journey? or

did she leave you by her usual shortness of visits. I love to know how you go on.

I cannot but think on your kindness and my master's. Life has, upon the whole, fallen short, very short, of my early expectation; but the acquisition of such a friendship, at an age when new friendships are seldom required, is something better than the general course of things gives man a right to expect. I think on it with great delight; I am not very apt to be delighted. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.—To the Same.

Litchfield, Oct. 27th, 1777.

Dear Madam,

You talk of writing and writing, as if you had all the writing to yourself. If our correspondence were printed, I am sure posterity, for posterity is always the author's favourite, would say that I am a good writer too.—*Anch' io sono pittore.* To sit down so often with nothing to say; to say something so often, almost without consciousness of saying, and without any remembrance of having said, is a power of which I will not violate my modesty by boasting, but I do not believe that every body has it.

Some, when they write to their friends, are all affection; some are wise and sententious; some strain their powers for efforts of gayety; some write news, and some write secrets; but to make a letter without affection, without wisdom, without gayety, without news, and without a secret, is, doubtless, the great epistolic art.

In a man's letters, you know, Madam, his soul lies naked, his letters are only the mirror of his breast; whatever passes within him is shown undisguised in its natural process; nothing is inverted, nothing distorted: you see systems in their elements; you discover actions in their motives.

Of this great truth, sounded by the knowing to the ignorant, and so echoed by the ignorant to the knowing, what evidence have you now before you? Is not my soul laid open in these veracious pages? Do not you see me reduced to my first principles? This is the pleasure of corresponding with a friend, where doubt and distrust have no place, and every thing is said as it is thought. The original idea is laid down in its simple purity, and all the supervenient conceptions are spread over it, *stratum super stratum*, as they happen to be formed. These are the letters by which souls are united, and by which minds naturally in unison move each other as they are moved themselves. I know, dearest lady, that in the perusal of this, such is the consanguinity of our intellects, you will be touched as I am touched. I have indeed concealed nothing from you, nor do I expect ever to repent of having thus opened my heart. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.—To the Same.

Nov. 10th, 1777.

Dear Madam,

And so, supposing that I might come to town and neglect to give you notice, or thinking some other strange thought, but certainly thinking wrong, you fall to writing about me to Tom Davies, as if he could tell you any thing that I would not have you know. As soon as I came hither, I let you know of my arrival; and the consequence is, that I am summoned to Brighthelmstone through storms, and cold, and dirt, and all the hardships of wintry journeys. You know my natural dread of all those evils; yet to show my master an example of compliance, and to let you know how much I long to see you, and to boast how little I give way to disease, my purpose is to be with you on Friday.

I am sorry for poor Nezzy, and hope she will in time be better; I hope the same for myself. The rejuvenescency of Mr. Scrase gives us both reason to hope, and therefore both of us rejoice in his recovery. I wish him well besides as a friend to my master.

I am just come home from not seeing my Lord Mayor's show, but I might have seen at least part of it. But I saw Miss Wesley and her brothers; she sends her compliments. Mrs. Williams is come home I think a very little better.

Every body was an enemy to that wig.—We will burn it, and get drunk; for what is joy without drink? Wagers are laid in the city about our success, which is yet, as the French call it, problematical. Well, but seriously, I think I shall be glad to see you in your own hair; but do not take too much time in combing, and twisting, and papering, and unpapering, and curling, and frizzing, and powdering, and getting out the powder, with all the other operations required in the cultivation of a head of hair; yet let it be combed at least once in three months, on the quarter-day—I could wish it might be combed once at least in six weeks; if I were to indulge my wishes, but what are wishes without hopes, I should fancy the operation performed—one knows not when one has enough—perhaps every morning. I am, dearest lady, your, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.—To the Same.

Ashbourne, June 14th, 1779

Dear Madam,

Your account of Mr. Thrale's illness is very terrible; but when I remember that he seems to have it peculiar to his constitution, that whatever distemper he has, he always has his head affected, I am less frighted. The seizure was, I think, not apoplectical, but hysterical, and therefore not dangerous to life. I would have you however consult such physicians as you think you can best trust. Bromfield seems to have done well, and by his practice appears not to suspect any apoplexy. This is a solid and fundamental comfort. I remember Dr. Marsigli, an Italian physician, whose seizure was more violent than Mr. Thrale's, for he fell down helpless, but his case was not considered as of much danger, and he went safe home, and is now a professor at Padua. His fit was considered as only hysterical.

I hope Sir Philip, who franked your letter, comforts you as well as Mr. Seward. If I can comfort you, I will come to you; but I hope you are now no longer in want of and help to be happy. I am, &c.

The Doctor sends his compliments; he is one of the people that are growing old.

LETTER XL.—To the Same.

Ashbourne, June 14th, 1779.

Dear Madam,

How near we are all to extreme danger. We are merry or sad, or busy or idle, and forget that death is hovering over us. You are a dear lady for writing again. The case, as you now describe it, is worse than I conceived it when I read your first letter. It is still however not apoplectic, but seems to have something worse than hysterical, a tendency to a palsy, which I hope however is now over. I am glad that you have Heberden, and hope we are all safer. I am the more alarmed by this violent seizure, as I can impute it to no wrong practices, or intemperance of any kind, and therefore know not how any defence or preservative can be obtained. Mr. Thrale has certainly less exercise than when he followed the foxes; but he is very far from unwieldiness or inactivity, and further still from any vicious or dangerous excess. I fancy, however, he will do well to ride more.

Do, dear Madam, let me know every post how he goes on. Such sudden violence is very dreadful; we know not by what it is let loose upon us, nor by what its effects are limited.

If my coming can either assist or divert, or be useful to any purpose, let me but know. I will soon be with you.

Mrs. Kennedy, Queeney's Baucis, ended last week a long life of disease and poverty. She had been married about fifty years.

Dr. Taylor is not much amiss, but always complaining. I am, &c.

LETTER XLI.—To Mr. Thrale.

Litchfield, June 23d, 1779.

Dear Sir,

To show you how well I think of your health, I have sent you a hundred pounds to keep for me. It will come within one day of quarter-day, and that day you must give me. I came by it in a very uncommon manner, and would not confound it with the rest.

My wicked mistress talks as if she thought it possible for me to be indifferent or negligent about your health or hers. If I could have done any good, I had not delayed an hour to come to you; and I will come very soon to try if my advice can be of any use, or my company of any entertainment.

What can be done you must do for yourself; do not let any uneasy thought settle in your mind. Cheerfulness and exercise are your great remedies. Nothing is for the present worth your anxiety. *Vivite læti* is one of the great rules of health. I believe it will be good to ride often, but never to weariness, for weariness is itself a temporary resolution of the nerves, and is therefore to be avoided. Labour is exercise continued to fatigue—exercise is labour used only while it produces pleasure.

Above all, keep your mind quiet: do not think with earnestness even of your health; but think on such things as may please without too much agitation; among which I hope is, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER XLII.—To Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam,

On Sunday I dined with poor Lawrence, who is deafer than ever. When he was told that Dr. Moisy visited Mr. Thrale, he inquired for what? and said there was nothing to be done, which Nature would not do for herself. On Sunday evening I was at Mrs. Vesey's, and there was inquiry about my master, but I told them all good. There was Dr. Bernard of Eton, and we made a noise all the evening; and there was Pepys, and Wraxal till I drove him away. And I have no loss of my mistress, who laughs, and frisks, and frolicks it all the long day, and never thinks of poor Colin.

If Mr. Thrale will but continue to mend, we shall, I hope, come together again, and do as good things as ever we did; but perhaps you will be made too proud to heed me, and yet as I have often told you, it will not be easy for you to find such another.

Queeney has been a good girl, and wrote me a letter; if Burney said she would write, she told you a fib. She writes nothing to me. She can write home fast enough. I have a good mind not to let her know that Dr. Bernard, to whom I had recommended her novel, speaks of it with great commendation, and that the copy which she lent me, has been read by Dr. Lawrence three times over. And yet what a gipsy it is. She no more minds me than if I were a Brangton. Pray speak to Queency to write again.

I have had a cold and a cough, and taken opium, and think I am better. We have had very cold weather; bad riding weather for my master, but he will surmount it all. Did Mrs. Browne make any reply to your comparison of business with solitude, or did you quite down her? I am much pleased to think that Mrs. Cotton thinks me worth a frame, and a place upon her wall; her kindness was hardly within my hope, but time does wonderful things. All my fear is, that if I should come again, my print would be taken down. I fear I shall never hold it.

Who dines with you? Do you seek Dr. Woodward or Dr. Harrington? Do you go to the house where they write for the myrtle? You are at all places of high resort, and bring home hearts by dozens; while I am seeking for something to say about men of whom I know nothing but their verses, and sometimes very little of them. Now I have begun, however, I do not despair of making an end. Mr. Nichols holds that Addison is the most *taking* of all that I have done. I doubt they will not be done before you come away.

Now you think yourself the first writer in the world for a letter about nothing. Can you write such a letter as this? So miscellaneous, with such noble disdain of regularity, like Shakspeare's works; such graceful negligence of transition, like the ancient enthusiasts? The pure voice of nature and of friendship. Now of whom shall I proceed to speak? Of whom but Mrs. Montague? Having mentioned Shakspeare and Nature, does not the name of Montague force itself upon me? Such were the transitions of the ancients, which now seem abrupt, because the intermediate idea is lost to modern understandings. I wish her name had connected

itself with friendship; but, ah Colin, thy hopes are in vain! One thing however is left me, I have still to complain; but I hope I shall not complain much while you have any kindness for me. I am, dearest and dearest Madam, your, &c.

London, April 11th, 1780.

LETTER XLIII.—To the Same.

Dearest Madam,

Mr. Thrale never will live abstinently, till he can persuade himself to abstain by rule. I lived on potatoes on Friday, and on spinach to-day; but I have had, I am afraid, too many dinners of late. I took physic too both days, and hope to fast to-morrow. When he comes home, we will shame him, and Jebb shall scold him into regularity. I am glad, however, that he is always one of the company, and that my dear Queeney is again another. Encourage, as you can, the musical girl.

Nothing is more common than mutual dislike where mutual approbation is particularly expected. There is often on both sides a vigilance, not over benevolent; and as attention is strongly excited, so that nothing drops unheeded, any difference in taste or opinion, and some difference where there is no restraint will commonly appear, immediately generates dislike.

Never let criticisms operate upon your face or your mind; it is very rarely that an author is hurt by his critics. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the socket; a very few names may be considered as perpetual lamps that shine unconsumed. From the author of Fitzosborne's Letters I cannot think myself in much danger. I met him only once about thirty years ago, and in some small dispute reduced him to whistle; having not seen him since, that is the last impression. Poor Moore the Fabulist was one of the company.

Mrs. Montague's long stay against her own inclination, is very convenient. You would, by your own confession, want a companion; and she is *par pluribus*, conversing with her you may *find variety in one*.

At Mrs. Ord's I met one Mrs. B———, a travelled lady, of great spirit, and some consciousness of her own abilities. We had a contest of gallantry, an hour long, so much to the diversion of the company, that at Ramsay's last night, in a crowded room, they would have pitted us again. There were Smelt, and the Bishop of St. Asaph, who comes to every place; and Lord Monboddo, and Sir Joshua, and ladies out of tale.

The Exhibition, how will you do either to see or not to see! The Exhibition is eminently splendid. There is contour, and keeping, and grace, and expression, and all the varieties of artificial excellence. The apartments were truly very noble. The pictures, for the sake of a skylight, are at the top of the house; there we dined, and I sat over against the Archbishop of York. See how I live when I am not under petticoat government. I am, &c.

London, May 1, 1780.

LETTER XLIV.—To the Same.

London, June 9, 1780.

Dear Madam,

To the question, Who was impressed with consternation? it may with great truth be answered that every body was impressed, for nobody was sure of his safety.

On Friday the good Protestants met in St. George's Fields, at the summons of Lord George Gordon, and marching to Westminster, insulted the Lords and Commons, who all bore it with great tameness. At night the outrages began by the demolition of the mass-house by Lincoln's Inn.

An exact journal of a week's defiance of government I cannot give you. On Monday, Mr. Strahan, who had been insulted, spoke to Lord Mansfield, who had, I think, been insulted, too, of the licentiousness of the populace; and his Lordship treated it as a very slight irregularity. On Tuesday night they pulled down Fielding's house, and burnt his goods in the street. They had gutted on Monday Sir George Savile's house, but the building was saved. On Tuesday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate to demand their companions who had been seized demolishing the chapel. The keeper could not release them but by the Mayor's permission, which he went to ask; at his return he found all the prisoners released, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomsbury, and fastened upon Lord Mansfield's house, which they pulled down; and as for his goods, they totally burnt them. They have since gone to Cane-wood, but a guard was there before them. They plundered some Papists, I think, and burnt a mass-house in Moorfields the same night.

On Wednesday I walked with Dr. Scott to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Session-house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed, in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and Wood-street Counter, and Clerkenwell Bridewell, and released all the prisoners.

At night they set fire to the Fleet and to the King's Bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful. Some people were threatened; Mr. Strahan advised me to take care of myself. Such a time of terror you have been happy in not seeing.

The King said in council, that the magistrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own; and a proclamation was published, directing us to keep our servants within doors, as the peace was now to be preserved by force. The soldiers were sent out to different parts, and the town is now quiet.

What has happened at your house you will know, the harm is only a few butts of beer; and I think you may be sure that the danger is over. There is a body of soldiers at St. Margaret's Hill.

Of Mr. Tyson I know nothing, nor can guess to what he can allude; but I know that a young fellow, of little more than seventy, is naturally an unresisted conqueror of hearts.

Pray tell Mr. Thrale that I live here and have no fruit, and, if he does not interpose, am not likely to have much; but I think he might

as well give me a little as give all to the gardener.

Pray make my compliments to Quecney and Burney. I am, &c.

LETTER XLV.—To the Same.

June 10th, 1780.

Dear Madam,

You have ere now heard and read enough to convince you that we have had something to suffer, and something to fear, and therefore I think it necessary to quiet the solicitude which you undoubtedly feel, by telling you that our calamities and terrors are now at an end. The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call; there is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to prison; the streets are safe and quiet: Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day with a party of soldiers in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper. Every body walks, and eats, and sleeps in security. But the history of the last week would fill you with amazement: it is without any modern example.

Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive Papists have been plundered, but the high sport was to burn the jails. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken, and two pirates have surrendered themselves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned.

Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all again under the protection of the king and the law. I thought that it would be agreeable to you and my master to have my testimony to the public security; and that you would sleep more quietly when I told you that you are safe. I am, dearest lady, your, &c.

LETTER XLVI.—To the Same.

London, April 5th, 1781.

Dearest Madam,

Of your injunctions, to pray for you, and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of Him who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother; and at last the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in Heaven.

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and use those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business, has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expenses, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses, and all the goods.

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin which shall never end. I am, dearest Madam, your, &c.

LETTER XLVII.—To the Same.

April 7th, 1781.

Dear Madam,

I hope you begin to find your mind grow clearer. My part of the loss hangs upon me. I have lost a friend of boundless kindness, at an age when it is very unlikely that I should find another.

If you think change of place likely to relieve you, there is no reason why you should not go to Bath; the distances are unequal, but with regard to practice and business they are the same. It is a day's journey from either place; and the post is more expeditious and certain to Bath. Consult only your inclination, for there is really no other principle of choice. God direct and bless you.

Mr. C——— has offered Mr. P——— money, but it was not wanted. I hope we shall all do all we can to make you less unhappy, and you must do all you can for yourself. What we, or what you can do, will for a time be but little; yet certainly that calamity, which may be considered as doomed to fall inevitably on half mankind, is not finally without alleviation.

It is something for me, that, as I have not the decrepitude, I have not the callousness of old age. I hope in time to be less afflicted. I am, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.—To the Same.

London, April 9th, 1781.

Dear Madam,

That you are gradually recovering your tranquillity is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends, you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has

different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty deserves great praise; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day. I am, &c.

LETTER XLIX.—To the Same.

Bolt-court, Fleet-street, June 19th, 1783.

Dear Madam,

I am sitting down in no cheerful solitude to write a narrative which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will perhaps pass over now with a careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard, however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know; and I do not blame myself, who have for a great part of human life done you what good I could, and have never done you evil.

I have been disordered in the usual way, and have been relieved by the usual methods, by opium and cathartics, but had rather lessened my dose of opium.

On Monday the 16th I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted I suppose about half a minute; I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytic stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself, when it should come, would excite less horror than seems now to attend it.

In order to rouse the vocal organs, I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think, slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech, he left me my hand: I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand to act as occasion should require. In penning this note I had some difficulty; my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden, and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly and very disinterested, and give me great hopes, but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's prayer with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

How this will be received by you I know not. I hope you will sympathise with me; but perhaps

> My mistress, gracious, mild, and good,
> Cries, Is he dumb? 'Tis time he should.

But can this be possible? I hope it cannot. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be in a sober and serious hour remembered by you; and surely it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honoured you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have in this great distress your pity and your prayers. You see I yet turn to you with my complaints, as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred.

To the girls, who do not write often, for Susy has written only once, and Miss Thrale owes me a letter, I earnestly recommend, as their guardian and friend, that they remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

I suppose you may wish to know how my disease is treated by the physicians. They put a blister upon my back, and two from my ear to my throat, one on a side. The blister on the back has done little, and those on the throat have not risen. I bullied and bounced, (it sticks to our last sand,) and compelled the apothecary to make his salve according to the Edinburgh Dispensatory, that it might adhere better. I have two on now of my own prescription. They likewise give me salt of hartshorn, which I take with no great confidence, but I am satisfied that what can be done is done for me.

O God! give me comfort and confidence in Thee; forgive my sins; and if it be thy good pleasure, relieve my diseases for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I am almost ashamed of this querulous letter; but now it is written, let it go. I am, &c.

LETTER L.—To the Same.

Dear Madam,

Among those that have inquired after me, Sir Philip is one; and Dr. Burney was one of those who came to see me. I have had no reason to complain of indifference or neglect. Dick Burney is come home five inches taller.

Yesterday, in the evening, I went to church, and have been to-day to see the great burning-glass, which does more than was ever done before by the transmission of the rays, but is not equal

in power to those which reflect them. It wastes a diamond placed in the focus, but causes no diminution of pure gold. Of the rubics exposed to its action, one was made more vivid, the other paler. To see the glass, I climbed up stairs to the garret, and then up a ladder to the leads, and talked to the artist rather too long; for my voice, though clear and distinct for a little while, soon tires and falters. The organs of speech are yet very feeble, but will, I hope, be by the mercy of God finally restored: at present, like any other weak limb, they can endure but little labour at once. Would you not have been very sorry for me when I could scarcely speak?

Fresh cantharides were this morning applied to my head, and are to be continued some time longer. If they play me no treacherous tricks, they give me very little pain.

Let me have your kindness and your prayers; and think on me as on a man, who, for a very great portion of your life, has done you all the good he could, and desires still to be considered, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LI.—To the Same.

London, July, 1, 1783.

Dearest Madam,

This morning I took the air by a ride to Hampstead, and this afternoon I dined with the club. But fresh cantharides were this day applied to my head.

Mr. Cator called on me to-day, and told me that he had invited you back to Streatham. I showed the unfitness of your return thither, till the neighbourhood should have lost its habits of depredation, and he seemed to be satisfied. He invited me very kindly and cordially to try the air of Beckenham, and pleased me very much by his affectionate attention to Miss Vezy. There is much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge.

Queeney seems now to have forgotten me. Of the different appearance of the hills and valleys an account may perhaps be given, without the supposition of any prodigy. If she had been out and the evening was breezy, the exhalations would rise from the low grounds very copiously; and the wind that swept and cleared the hills, would only by its cold condense the vapours of the sheltered valleys.

Murphy is just gone from me; he visits me very kindly, and I have no unkindness to complain of.

I am sorry that Sir Philip's request was not treated with more respect, nor can I imagine what has put them so much out of humour; I hope their business is prosperous.

I hope that I recover by degrees, but my nights are restless; and you will suppose the nervous system to be somewhat enfeebled. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LII.—To the Same.

London, Oct. 9th, 1783.

Two nights ago Mr. Burke sat with me a long time; he seems much pleased with his journey. We had both seen Stonehenge this summer for the first time. I told him that the view had enabled me to confute two opinions which have been advanced about it. One that the materials are not natural stones, but an artificial composition hardened by time. This notion is as old as Camden's time; and has this strong argument to support it, that stone of that species is no where to be found. The other opinion, advanced by Dr. Charlton, is, that it was erected by the Danes.

Mr. Bowles made me observe, that the transverse stones were fixed on the perpendicular supporters by a knob formed on the top of the upright stone, which entered into a hollow cut in the crossing stone. This is a proof that the enormous edifice was raised by a people who had not yet the knowledge of mortar; which cannot be supposed of the Danes, who came hither in ships, and were not ignorant certainly of the arts of life. This proves likewise the stones not to be factitious; for they that could mould such durable masses could do much more than make mortar, and could have continued the transverse from the upright part with the same paste.

You have doubtless seen Stonehenge; and if you have not, I should think it a hard task to make an adequate description.

It is, in my opinion, to be referred to the earliest habitation of the island, as a druidical monument of at least two thousand years; probably the most ancient work of man upon the island. Salisbury cathedral and its neighbour Stonehenge, are two eminent monuments of art and rudeness, and may show the first essay, and the last perfection in architecture.

I have not yet settled my thoughts about the generation of light air, which I indeed once saw produced, but I was at the height of my great complaint. I have made inquiry, and shall soon be able to tell you how to fill a balloon. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LIII.—To the Same.

London, Dec. 27th, 1783.

Dear Madam,

The wearisome solitude of the long evenings did indeed suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

The time of the year, for I hope the fault is rather in the weather than in me, has been very hard upon me. The muscles of my breast are much convulsed. Dr. Heberden recommends opiates, of which I have such horror that I do not think of them but *in extremis*. I was, however, driven to them last night for refuge, and having taken the usual quantity, durst not go to bed, for fear of that uncasiness to which a supine posture exposes me, but rested all night in a chair with much relief, and have been to-day more warm, active, and cheerful.

You have more than once wondered at my complaint of solitude when you hear that I am crowded with visits. *Inopem me copia fecit.* Visiters are no proper companions in the chamber of sickness. They come when I could sleep or read, they stay till I am weary, they force me to attend when my mind calls for relaxation, and to speak when my powers will hardly actuate my tongue. The amusements and consolations

of languor and depression are conferred by familiar and domestic companions, which can be visited or called at will, and can occasionally be quieted or dismissed, who do not obstruct accommodation by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear lady, to you and my dear girls, many a cheerful and pious Christmas. I am, your, &c.

LETTER LIV.—To Mrs. Piozzi.

London, July 8th, 1784.

Deak Madam,

What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me; I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security; your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons; but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The queen went forward.—If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther.—The tears stand in my eyes.

I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection, your, &c.

I R E N E:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mahomet, Emperor of the Turks,			*Mr. Barry.*
Cali Bassa, First Vizier,			*Mr. Berry.*
Mustapha, a Turkish Aga,			*Mr. Sowden.*
Abdalla, an Officer,			*Mr. Havard.*
Hasen, Caraza,	Turkish Captains,		*Mr. Usher.* *Mr. Burton.*
Demetrius, Leontius,	Greek Noblemen,		*Mr. Garrick.* *Mr. Blakes.*
Murza, an Eunuch,			*Mr. King.*
Aspasia, Irene,	Greek Ladies,		*Mrs. Cibber.* *Mrs. Pritchard.*
		Attendants on Irene.	

PROLOGUE.

Ye glittering train, whom lace and velvet bless,
Suspend the soft solicitudes of dress!
From grovelling business and superfluous care,
Ye sons of Avarice, a moment spare!
Votaries of Fame, and worshippers of Power,
Dismiss the pleasing phantoms for an hour!
Our daring bard, with spirit unconfined,
Spreads wide the mighty moral for mankind.
Learn here how Heaven supports the virtuous mind,
Daring, though calm, and vigorous, though resign'd.
Learn here what anguish racks the guilty breast,
In power dependent, in success deprest.
Learn here that Peace from Innocence must flow;
All else is empty sound, and idle show.
If truths like these with pleasing language join;
Ennobled, yet unchanged, if Nature shine;
If no wild draught depart from Reason's rules,
Nor gods his heroes, nor his lovers fools;
Intriguing Wits! his artless plot forgive;
And spare him, Beauties, though his lovers live.
Be this at least his praise, be this his pride;
To force applause no modern arts are try'd.
Should partial catcalls all his hopes confound,
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound.
Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy pit.
No snares to captivate the judgment spreads,
Nor bribes your eyes to prejudice your heads.
Unmoved though Witlings sneer and Rivals rail,
Studious to please, yet not ashamed to fail.
He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain
With merit needless, and without it vain.
In Reason, Nature, Truth, he dares to trust:
Ye Fops, be silent: and ye Wits, be just

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Demetrius *and* Leontius, *in Turkish Habits.*

Leon. And is it thus Demetrius meets his friend,
Hid in the mean disguise of Turkish robes,
With servile secrecy to lurk in shades,
And vent our sufferings in clandestine groans?
Dem. Till breathless fury rested from destruction,
These groans were fatal, these disguises vain;
But now our Turkish conquerors have quench'd
Their rage, and pall'd their appetite of murder;
No more the glutted sabre thirsts for blood,
And weary cruelty remits her tortures.
Leon. Yet Greece enjoys no gleam of transient hope,
No soothing interval of peaceful sorrow;
The lust of gold succeeds the rage of conquest,
The lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless,
The last corruption of degenerate man!
Urged by the imperious soldier's fierce command,
The groaning Greeks break up their golden caverns
Pregnant with stores that India's mines might envy,
Th' accumulated wealth of toiling ages.
Dem. That wealth too sacred for their country's use!
That wealth, too pleasing to be lost for freedom!
That wealth, which, granted to their weeping prince,
Had ranged embattled nations at our gates!
But, thus reserved to lure the wolves of Turkey,
Adds shame to grief, and infamy to ruin.
Lamenting Avarice now too late discovers
Her own neglected in the public safety.
Leon. Reproach not misery.—The sons of Greece,
Ill-fated race! so oft besieged in vain,
With false security beheld invasion.
Why should they fear?—That power that kindly spreads
The clouds, a signal of impending showers,
To warn the wandering linnet to the shade,
Beheld without concern expiring Greece,
And not one prodigy foretold our fate.
Dem. A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it.
A feeble government, eluded laws,
A factious populous, luxurious nobles,
And all the maladies of sinking states.
When public Villainy, too strong for justice,
Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,
Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,
Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard?
When some neglected fabric nods beneath
The weight of years, and totters to the tempest,
Must Heaven despatch the messengers of light,
Or wake the dead, to warn us of its fall?
Leon. Well might the weakness of our empire sink
Before such foes of more than human force;
Some power invisible, from heaven or hell,
Conducts their armies, and asserts their cause.
Dem. And yet, my friend, what miracles were wrought
Beyond the power of constancy and courage?
Did unresisted lightning aid their cannon?
Did roaring whirlwinds sweep us from the ramparts?
'Twas vice that shook our nerves, 'twas vice, Leontius,
That froze our veins, and wither'd all our powers.
Leon. Whate'er our crimes, our woes demand compassion.
Each night, protected by the friendly darkness,
Quitting my close retreat, I range the city,
And, weeping, kiss the venerable ruins:
With silent pangs I view the towering domes,
Sacred to prayer, and wander through the streets,
Where commerce lavish'd unexhausted plenty,
And jollity maintain'd eternal revels.
Dem. How changed, alas!—Now ghastly Desolation
In triumph sits upon our shatter'd spires;
Now superstition, ignorance, and error,
Usurp our temples, and profane our altars.
Leon. From every palace bursts a mingled clamour,
The dreadful dissonance of barbarous triumph,
Shrieks of affright and wailings of distress.
Oft when the cries of violated beauty
Arose to Heaven, and pierced my bleeding breast,
I felt thy pains, and trembled for Aspasia.
Dem. Aspasia! spare that loved, that mournful name:
Dear, hapless maid—tempestuous grief o'erbears
My reasoning powers—Dear, hapless, lost Aspasia!
Leon. Suspend the thought.
Dem. All thought on her is madness;
Yet let me think—I see the helpless maid,
Behold the monsters gaze with savage rapture,
Behold how lust and rapine struggle round her;
Leon. Awake, Demetrius, from this dismal dream,
Sink not beneath imaginary sorrows;
Call to your age, your courage and your wisdom;
Think on the sudden change of human scenes;
Think on the various accidents of war;
Think on the mighty power of awful virtue;
Think on that Providence that guards the good.
Dem. O Providence! extend thy care to me,
For Courage droops unequal to the combat,
And weak Philosophy denies her succours.
Sure some kind sabre in the heat of battle,
Ere yet the foe found leisure to be cruel,
Dismissed her to the sky.
Leon. Some virgin martyr,
Perhaps, enamour'd of resembling virtue,
With gentle hand restrain'd the streams of life,
And snatch'd her timely from her country's fate.
Dem. From those bright regions of eternal day,
Where now thou shin'st among thy fellow saints,
Array'd in purer light, look down on me:
In pleasing visions and assuasive dreams,
O! soothe my soul, and teach me how to lose thee.
Leon. Enough of unavailing tears, Demetrius:
I come obedient to thy friendly summons,
And hoped to share thy councils, not thy sorrows:
While thus we mourn the fortune of Aspasia,
To what are we reserved?
Dem. To what I know not:
But hope, yet hope, to happiness and honour;
If happiness can be without Aspasia.
Leon. But whence this new-sprung hope?
Dem. From Cali Bassa, chief counsels.
The chief, whose wisdom guides the Turkish
He, tired of slavery, though the highest slave,
Projects at once our freedom and his own;
And bids us thus disguised await him here.

Leon. Can he restore the state he could not save?
In vain, when Turkey's troops assail'd our walls,
His kind intelligence betray'd their measures;
Their arms prevailed, though Cali was our friend.
Dem. When the tenth sun had set upon our sorrows,
At midnight's private hour, a voice unknown
Sounds in my sleeping ear, "Awake, Demetrius,
Awake, and follow me to better fortune."
Surprised I start, and bless the happy dream;
Then, rousing, know the fiery chief Abdalla,
Whose quick impatience seized my doubtful hand,
And led me to the shore where Cali stood,
Pensive and list'ning to the beating surge.
There, in soft hints and in ambiguous phrase,
With all the diffidence of long experience,
That oft had practised fraud, and oft detected,
The veteran courtier half revealed his project.
By his command, equipp'd for speedy flight,
Deep in a winding creek a galley lies,
Mann'd with the bravest of our fellow-captives,
Selected by my care, a hardy band,
That long to hail thee chief.
Leon. But what avails
So small a force? or why should Cali fly?
Or how can Cali's flight restore our country?
Dem. Reserve these questions for a safer hour;
Or hear himself, for see the Bassa comes.

SCENE II.

Demetrius, Leontius, *and* Cali Bassa.

Cali. Now summon all thy soul, illustrious Christian!
Awake each faculty that sleeps within thee,
The courtier's policy, the sage's firmness,
The warrior's ardour, and the patriot's zeal:
If, chasing past events with vain pursuit,
Or wandering in the wilds of future being,
A single thought now rove, recall it home.
But can thy friend sustain the glorious cause,
The cause of liberty, the cause of nations?
Dem. Observe him closely with a statesman's eye,
Thou that hast long perused the draughts of Nature,
And knows't the characters of Vice and Virtue,
Left by the hand of Heaven on human clay.
Cali. His mien is lofty, his demeanour great,
Nor sprightly folly wantons in his air,
Nor dull serenity becalms his eyes.
Such had I trusted once as soon as seen,
But cautious age suspects the flattering form,
And only credits what experience tells.
Has silence press'd her seal upon his lips?
Does adamantine faith invest his heart?
Will he not bend beneath a tyrant's frown?
Will he not melt before ambition's fire?
Will he not soften in a friend's embrace?
Or flow dissolving in a woman's tears?
Dem. Sooner the trembling leaves shall find a voice,
And tell the secrets of their conscious walks;
Sooner the breeze shall catch the flying sounds,
And shock the tyrant with a tale of treason.
Your slaughter'd multitudes that swell the shore
With monuments of death, proclaim his courage;
Virtue and liberty engross his soul,
And leave no place for perfidy or fear.
Leon. I scorn a trust unwillingly reposed;
Demetrius will not lead me to dishonour;
Consult in private, call me when your scheme
Is ripe for action, and demands the sword.
[*Going.*
Dem. Leontius, stay.
Cali. Forgive an old man's weakness
And share the deepest secrets of my soul,
My wrongs, my fears, my motives, my designs.
When unsuccessful wars and civil factions,
Embroil'd the Turkish state, our Sultan's father
Great Amurath, at my request forsook,
The cloister's ease, resumed the tottering throne,
And snatch'd the reins of abdicated power,
From giddy Mahomet's unskilful hand.
This fired the youthful king's ambitious breast,
He murmurs vengeance at the name of Cali,
And dooms my rash fidelity to ruin.
Dem. Unhappy lot of all that shine in courts,
For forced compliance, or for zealous virtue,
Still odious to the monarch or the people.
Cali. Such are the woes when arbitrary power,
And lawless passion hold the sword of justice.
If there be any land, as fame reports,
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject,
A happy land, where circulating power
Flows through each member of th' embodied state;
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
Her grateful sons shine bright with every virtue;
Untainted with the lust of innovation,
Sure all unite to hold her league of rule
Unbroken as the sacred chain of nature,
That links the jarring elements in peace.
Leon. But say, great Bassa, why the Sultan's anger,
Burning in vain, delays the stroke of death?
Cali. Young and unsettled in his father's kingdoms,
Fierce as he was, he dreaded to destroy
The empire's darling and the soldier's boast;
But now confirm'd, and swelling with his conquests,
Secure he tramples my declining fame, [eyes.
Frowns unrestrain'd, and dooms me with his
Dem. What can reverse thy doom?
Cali. The tyrant's death.
Dem. But Greece is still forgot.
Cali. On Asia's coast,
Which lately bless'd my gentle government,
Soon as the Sultan's unexpected fate
Fills all th' astonish'd empire with confusion,
My policy shall raise an easy throne;
The Turkish powers from Europe shall retreat,
And harass Greece no more with wasteful war.
A galley mann'd with Greeks, thy charge, Leontius,
Attends to waft us to repose and safety.
Dem. That vessel, if observed, alarms the court,
And gives a thousand fatal questions birth:
Why stored for flight? and why prepared by Cali?
Cali. This hour I'll beg, with unsuspecting face,
Leave to perform my pilgrimage to Mecca:
Which granted, hides my purpose from the world,
And, though refused, conceals it from the Sultan.
Leon. How can a single hand attempt a life
Which armies guard, and citadels enclose?
Cali. Forgetful of command, with captive beauties,
Far from his troops, he toys his hours away.

A roving soldier seized, in Sophia's temple,
A virgin shining with distinguish'd charms,
And brought his beauteous plunder to the Sultan.
Dem. In Sophia's temple!—what alarm!—
Proceed. [loved:
Cali. The Sultan gazed, he wonder'd and he
In passion lost, he bade the conquering fair
Renounce her faith, and be the Queen of Turkey.
The pious maid, with modest indignation,
Threw back the glittering bribe.
Dem. Celestial goodness!
It must, it must be she! her name?
Cali. Aspasia. [soul!
Dem. What hopes, what terrors rush upon my
O lead me quickly to the scene of fate;
Break through the politician's tedious forms,
Aspasia calls me, let me fly to save her.
Leon. Did Mahomet reproach or praise her virtue?
Cali. His offers oft repeated, still refused,
At length rekindled his accustom'd fury,
And changed th' endearing smile and am'rous whisper
To threats of torture, death, and violation.
Dem. These tedious narratives of frozen age
Distract my soul; despatch thy lingering tale;
Say, did a voice from heaven restrain the tyrant?
Did interposing angels guard her from him?
Cali. Just in the moment of impending fate,
Another plunderer brought the bright Irene;
Of equal beauty, but of softer mien,
Fear in her eye, submission on her tongue,
Her mournful charms attracted his regards,
Disarm'd his rage, and in repeated visits
Gain'd all his heart; at length his eager love
To her transferr'd the offer of a crown.
Leon. Nor found again the bright temptation fail?
Cali. Trembling to grant, nor daring to refuse,
While Heaven and Mahomet divide her fears,
With coy caresses and with pleasing wiles
She feeds his hopes, and soothes him to delay.
For her, repose is banish'd from the night,
And business from the day. In her apartments
He lives————
Leon. And there must fall.
Cali. But yet th' attempt
Is hazardous.
Leon. Forbear to speak of hazards;
What has the wretch that has survived his
His friends, his liberty, to hazard? [country,
Cali. Life.
Dem. Th' inestimable privilege of breathing!
Important hazard! What's that airy bubble,
When weigh'd with Greece, with virtue, with Aspasia?
A floating atom, dust that falls unheeded
Into the adverse scale, nor shakes the balance.
Cali. At least this day be calm—If we succeed,
Aspasia's thine, and all thy life is rapture.—
See! Mustapha, the tyrant's minion comes;
Invest Leontius with his new command;
And wait Abdalla's unsuspected visits;
Remember Freedom, Glory, Greece, and Love.
[*Exeunt* Dem. *and* Leon.

SCENE III.

Cali, *and* Mustapha.

Mus. By what enchantment does this lovely Greek
Hold in her chains the captivated Sultan?
He tires his favourites with Irene's praise,
And seeks the shades to muse upon Irene;
Irene steals unheeded from his tongue,
And mingles unperceived with every thought.
Cali. Why should the Sultan shun the joys of beauty,
Or arm his breast against the force of love?
Love, that with sweet vicissitude relieves
The warrior's labours, and the monarch's cares.
But will she yet receive the faith of Mecca?
Mus. Those powerful tyrants of the female breast,
Fear and Ambition, urge her to compliance;
Dress'd in each charm of gay magnificence,
Alluring grandeur courts her to his arms,
Religion calls her from the wish'd embrace,
Paints future joys, and points to distant glories.
Cali. Soon will th' unequal contest be decided;
Prospects, obscured by distance, faintly strike;
Each pleasure brightens at its near approach,
And every danger shocks with double horror.
Mus. How shall I scorn the beautiful apostate;
How will the bright Aspasia shine above her!
Cali. Should she, for proselytes are always zealous,
With pious warmth receive our prophet's law—
Mus. Heaven will contemn the mercenary fervour,
Which love of greatness, not of truth, inflames.
Cali. Cease, cease thy censures; for the Sultan comes
Alone, with amorous haste to seek his love.

SCENE IV.

Mahomet, Cali Bassa, *and* Mustapha.

Cali. Hail! terror of the monarchs of the world,
Unshaken be thy throne as earth's firm base,
Live till the sun forgets to dart his beams,
And weary planets loiter in their courses!
Mah. But, Cali, let Irene share thy prayers;
For what is length of days without Irene?
I come from empty noise, and tasteless pomp,
From crowds that hide a monarch from himself,
To prove the sweets of privacy and friendship,
And dwell upon the beauties of Irene.
Cali. O may her beauties last unchanged by time,
As those that bless the mansions of the good!
Mah. Each realm where beauty turns the graceful shape,
Swells the fair breast, or animates the glance,
Adorns my palace with its brightest virgins;
Yet, unacquainted with these soft emotions,
I walk'd superior through the blaze of charms,
Praised without rapture, left without regret.
Why rove I now, when absent from my fair,
From solitude to crowds, from crowds to solitude,
Still restless, till I clasp the lovely maid,
And ease my loaded soul upon her bosom?
Mus. Forgive, great Sultan, that intrusive duty,
Inquires the final doom of Menodorus,
The Grecian counsellor.
Mah. Go see him die;
His martial rhetoric taught the Greeks resistance;
Had they prevail'd, I ne'er had known Irene.
[*Exit* Mustapha.

SCENE V.

Mahomet, *and* Cali.

Mah. Remote from tumult, in th' adjoining palace,
Thy care shall guard this treasure of my soul:

There let Aspasia, since my fair entreats it,
With converse chase the melancholy moments.
Sure, chill'd with sixty winter camps, thy blood
At sight of female charms will glow no more.
Cali. These years, unconquer'd Mahomet, demand
Desires more pure, and other cares than love.
Long have I wish'd, before our prophet's tomb,
To pour my prayers for thy successful reign,
To quit the tumults of the noisy camp,
And sink into the silent grave in peace.
Mah. What! think of peace while haughty Scanderbeg,
Elate with conquest, in his native mountains,
Prowls o'er the wealthy spoils of bleeding Turkey!
While fair Hungaria's unexhausted valleys
Pour forth their legions, and the roaring Danube
Rolls half his floods unheard through shouting camps!
Nor couldst thou more support a life of sloth
Than Amurath—
Cali. Still full of Amurath. [*Aside.*
Mah. Than Amurath, accustom'd to command,
Could bear his son upon the Turkish throne.
Cali. This pilgrimage our lawgiver ordain'd—
Mah. For those who could not please by nobler service.
Our warlike Prophet loves an active faith.
The holy flame of enterprizing virtue
Mocks the dull vows of solitude and penance,
And scorns the lazy hermit's cheap devotion.
Shine thou, distinguish'd by superior merit,
With wonted zeal pursue the task of war,
Till every nation reverence the Koran,
And every suppliant lift his eyes to Mecca.
Cali. This regal confidence, this pious ardour,
Let prudence moderate, though not suppress.
Is not each realm that smiles with kinder suns,
Or boasts a happier soil, already thine?
Extended empire, like expanded gold,
Exchanges solid strength for feeble splendour.
Mah. Preach thy dull politics to vulgar kings,
Thou know'st not yet thy master's future greatness,
His vast designs, his plans of boundless power.
When every storm in my domain shall roar,
When every wave shall beat a Turkish shore;
Then, Cali, shall the toils of battle cease,
Then dream of prayer, and pilgrimage, and peace. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

ASPASIA *and* IRENE.

Irene. Aspasia, yet pursue the sacred theme;
Exhaust the stores of pious eloquence,
And teach me to repel the Sultan's passion.
Still at Aspasia's voice a sudden rapture
Exalts my soul, and fortifies my heart.
The glittering vanities of empty greatness,
The hopes and fears, the joys and pains of life,
Dissolve in air, and vanish into nothing.
Asp. Let nobler hopes and juster fears succeed,
And bar the passes of Irene's mind
Against returning guilt.
Irene. When thou art absent,
Death rises to my view, with all his terrors:
Then visions, horrid as a murderer's dreams,
Chill my resolves, and blast my blooming virtue:
Stern Torture shakes his bloody scourge before me,
And Anguish gnashes on the fatal wheel.
Asp. Since fear predominates in every thought,
And sways thy breast with absolute dominion,
Think on the insulting scorn, the conscious pangs,
The future miseries that wait the apostate;
So shall Timidity assist thy reason,
And Wisdom into virtue turn thy frailty.
Irene. Will not that Power that form'd the heart of woman,
And wove the feeble texture of her nerves,
Forgive those fears that shake the tender frame?
Asp. The weakness we lament, ourselves create;
Instructed from our infant years to court,
With counterfeited fears, the aid of man,
We learn to shudder at the rustling breeze,
Start at the light, and tremble in the dark;
Till, affectation ripening to belief,
And Folly frighted at her own chimeras,
Habitual cowardice usurps the soul.
Irene. Not all like thee can brave the shocks of fate. [ledge,
Thy soul, by nature great, enlarged by know-
Soars unencumber'd with our idle cares,
And all Aspasia, but her beauty's man.
Asp. Each generous sentiment is thine, Dometrius,
Whose soul, perhaps, yet mindful of Aspasia,
Now hovers o'er this melancholy shade,
Well pleased to find thy precepts not forgotten.
O! could the grave restore the pious hero,
Soon would his art or valour set us free,
And bear us far from servitude and crimes.
Irene. He yet may live.
Asp. Alas! delusive dream!
Too well I know him; his immoderate courage,
The impetuous sallies of excessive virtue,
Too strong for love, have hurried him on death.

SCENE II.

ASPASIA, IRENE, CALI, *and* ABDALLA.

Cali. [*To* ABD. *as they advance.*] Behold our future Sultaness, Abdalla;
Let artful flattery now, to lull suspicion,
Glide through Irene to the Sultan's ear.
Would'st thou subdue the obdurate cannibal
To tender friendship, praise him to his mistress.
[*To* IRENE.
Well may those eyes that view these heavenly charms
Reject the daughters of contending kings;
For what are pompous titles, proud alliance,
Empire or wealth, to excellence like thine?
Abd. Receive the impatient Sultan to thy arms;
And may a long posterity of monarchs,
The pride and terror of succeeding days,
Rise from the happy bed; and future queens
Diffuse Irene's beauty through the world!
Irene. Can Mahomet's imperial hand descend
To clasp a slave? or can a soul like mine,
Unused to power, and form'd for humbler scenes,
Support the splendid miseries of greatness?
Cali. No regal pageant, decked with casual honours,
Scorn'd by his subjects, trampelled by his foes,
No feeble tyrant of a petty state,
Courts thee to shake on a dependant throne;

Born to command, as thou to charm mankind,
The Sultan from himself derives his greatness.
Observe bright maid, as his resistless voice
Drives on the tempest of destructive war,
How nation after nation falls before him.
Abd. At his dread name the distant mountains shake [ness,
Their cloudy summits, and the sons of fierce-
That range uncivilized from rock to rock,
Distrust the eternal fortresses of Nature,
And wish their gloomy caverns more obscure.
Asp. Forbear this lavish pomp of dreadful praise;
The horrid images of war and slaughter
Renew our sorrows and awake our fears.
Abd. Cali, methinks yon waving trees afford
A doubtful glimpse of our approaching friends;
Just as I mark'd them, they forsook the shore,
And turn'd their hasty steps towards the garden.
Cali. Conduct these queens, Abdalla, to the palace:
Such heavenly beauty, form'd for adoration,
The pride of monarchs, the reward of conquests!
Such beauty must not shine to vulgar eyes.

SCENE III.

Cali. [*Solus.*] How Heaven, in scorn of human arroganee,
Commits to trivial chance the fate of nations!
While with incessant thought laborious man
Extends his mighty schemes of wealth and power,
And towers and triumphs in ideal greatness;
Some accidental gust of opposition
Blasts all the beauties of his new creation.
O'erturns the fabric of presumptuous reason,
And whelms the swelling architect beneath it.
Had not the breeze untwined the meeting boughs,
And through the parted shade disclosed the Greeks,
Th' important hour had pass'd unheeded by,
In all the sweet oblivion of delight,
In all the fopperies of meeting lovers:
In sighs and tears, in transports and embraces,
In soft complaints, and idle protestations.

SCENE IV.

Cali, Demetrius, *and* Leontius.

Cali. Could omens fright the resolute and wise,
Well might we fear impending disappointments.
Leon. Your artful suit, your monarch's fierce denial,
The cruel doom of hapless Menodorus.—
Dem. And your new charge, that dear that heavenly maid.—
Leon. All this we know already from Abdalla.
Dem. Such slight defeats but animate the brave
To stronger efforts and maturer counsels.
Cali. My doom confirmed establishes my purpose.
Calmly he heard, till Amurath's resumption
Rose to his thought, and set his soul on fire:
When from his lips the fatal name burst out,
A sudden pause th' imperfect sense suspended,
Like the dread stillness of condensing storms.
Dem. The loudest cries of Nature urge us forward;
Despotic rage pursues the life of Cali;
His groaning country claims Leontius' aid;
And yet another voice, forgive me, Greece,
The powerful voice of Love inflames Demetrius,
Each lingering hour alarms me for Aspasia.
Cali. What passions reign among thy crew, Leontius?
Does cheerless diffidence oppress their hearts?
Or sprightly hope exalt their kindling spirits?
Do they with pain repress the struggling shout,
And listen eager to the rising wind?
Leon. All there is hope, and gayety and courage,
No cloudy doubts, or languishing delays,
Ere I could range them on the crowded deck,
At once a hundred voices thunder'd round me,
And every voice was Liberty and Greece.
Dem. Swift let us rush upon the careless tyrant,
Nor give him leisure for another crime.
Leon. Then let us now resolve, nor idly waste
Another hour in dull deliberation.
Cali. But see, where, destined to protract our counsels,
Comes Mustapha.—Your Turkish robes conceal you.
Retire with speed, while I prepare to meet him
With artificial smiles and seeming friendship.

SCENE V.

Cali *and* Mustapha.

Cali. I see the gloom that low'rs upon thy brow: [thee;
These days of love and pleasure charm not
Too slow these gentle constellations roll;
Thou long'st for stars that frown on human kind,
And scatter discord from their baleful beams.
Mus. How blest art thou, still jocund and serene,
Beneath the load of business, and of years!
Cali. Sure by some wondrous sympathy of souls,
My heart still beats responsive to the Sultan's;
I share, by secret instinct, all his joys,
And feel no sorrow while my sovereign smiles.
Mus. The Sultan comes, impatient for his love;
Conduct her hither: let no rude intrusion
Molest these private walks, or care invade
These hours assign'd to pleasure and Irene.

SCENE VI.

Mahomet *and* Mustapha.

Mah. Now, Mustapha, pursue thy tale of horror.
Has treason's dire infection reach'd my palace?
Can Cali dare the stroke of heavenly justice
In the dark precincts of a gaping grave,
And load with perjuries his parting soul?
Was it for this that sickening in Epirus,
My father call'd me to his couch of death,
Join'd Cali's hand to mine, and faltering cried,
Restrain the fervour of impetuous youth
With venerable Cali's faithful counsels?
Are these the counsels, this the faith of Cali?
Were all our favours lavish'd on a villain?
Confest?——
Mus. Confest by dying Menodorus.
In his last agonies the gasping coward,
Amidst the tortures of the burning steel,
Still fond of life, groan'd out the dreadful secret,
Held forth this fatal scroll, then sunk to nothing.
Mah. [*Examining the Paper.*] His correspondence with our foes of Greece!

His hand! his seal! The secrets of my soul
Conceal'd from all but him! All, all conspire
To banish doubt, and brand him for a villain!
Our schemes for ever cross'd, our mines discover'd,
Betray'd some traitor lurking near my bosom.
Oft have I raged, when their wide wasting cannon
Lay pointed at our batteries yet unform'd,
And broke the meditated lines of war.
Detested Cali, too, with artful wonder,
Would shake his wily head, and closely whisper,
Beware of Mustapha, beware of treason.
Mus. The faith of Mustapha disdains suspicion;
But yet, great emperor, beware of treason;
Th' insidious Bassa, fired by disappointment—
Mah. Shall feel the vengeance of an injured king.
Go, seize him, load him with reproachful chains,
Before th' assembled troops proclaim his crimes;
Then leave him stretch'd upon the lingering rack,
Amidst the camp to howl his life away.
Mus. Should we before the troops proclaim his crimes;
I dread his arts of seeming innocence,
His bland address, and sorcery of tongue;
And, should he fall unheard by sudden justice,
Th' adoring soldiers would revenge their idol.
Mah. Cali, this day, with hypocritic zeal,
Implored my leave to visit Mecca's temple;
Struck with the wonder of a statesman's goodness,
I raised his thoughts to more sublime devotion.
Now let him go, pursued by silent wrath,
Meet unexpected daggers in his way,
And in some distant land obscurely die.
Mus. There will his boundless wealth, the spoil of Asia, [him,
Heap'd by your father's ill-placed bounties on
Disperse rebellion through the Eastern world;
Bribe to his cause, and list beneath his banners,
Arabia's roving troops, the sons of swiftness,
And arm the Persian heretic against thee;
There shall he waste thy frontiers, check thy conquests, [geance.
And, though at length subdued, elude thy ven-
Mah. Elude my vengeance! No—my troops shall range
Th' eternal snows that freeze beyond Mæotis,
And Afric's torrid sands, in search of Cali.
Should the fierce North upon his frozen wings
Bear him aloft above the wondering clouds,
And seat him in the Pleiads' golden chariots,
Thence shall my fury drag him down to tortures;
Wherever guilt can fly, revenge can follow.
Mus. Wilt thou dismiss the savage from the toils,
Only to hunt him round the ravaged world?
Mah. Suspend his sentence—Empire and Irene
Claim my divided soul. This wretch, unworthy
To mix with nobler cares, I'll throw aside
For idle hours, and crush him at my leisure.
Mus. Let not th' unbounded greatness of his mind
Betray my king to negligence of danger.
Perhaps the clouds of dark conspiracy [head.
Now roll full fraught with thunder o'er your
Twice since the morning rose I saw the Bassa,
Like a fell adder swelling in a brake,
Beneath the covert of this verdant arch
In private conference; beside him stood
Two men unknown, the partners of his bosom;
I mark'd them well, and traced in either face
The gloomy resolution, horrid greatness,
And stern composure, of despairing heroes;
And, to confirm my thoughts, at sight of me,
As blasted by my presence, they withdrew
With all the speed of terror and of guilt.
Mah. The strong emotions of my troubled soul
Allow no pause for art or for contrivance;
And dark perplexity distracts my counsels.
Do thou resolve: for see Irene comes!
At her approach each ruder gust of thought
Sinks like the sighing of a tempest spent,
And gales of softer passion fan my bosom.

[Cali *enters with* Irene, *and exit with* Mustapha.

SCENE VII.

Mahomet *and* Irene.

Mah. Wilt thou descend, fair daughter of perfection,
To hear my vows, and give mankind a queen?
Ah! cease, Irene, cease those flowing sorrows,
That melt a heart impregnable till now,
And turn thy thoughts henceforth to love and empire.
How will the matchless beauties of Irene,
Thus bright in tears, thus amiable in ruin,
With all the graceful pride of greatness heightened,
Amidst the blaze of jewels and of gold,
Adorn a throne, and dignify dominion!
Irene. Why all this glare of splendid eloquence,
To paint the pageantries of guilty state?
Must I for these renounce the hope of heaven,
Immortal crowns, and fulness of enjoyment?
Mah. Vain raptures all—For your inferior natures,
Form'd to delight, and happy by delighting,
Heaven has reserved no future paradise,
But bids you rove the paths of bliss, secure
Of total death, and careless of hereafter;
While Heaven's high minister, whose awful volume [man,
Records each act, each thought of sovereign
Surveys your plays with inattentive glance,
And leaves the lovely trifler unregarded.
Irene. Why then has Nature's vain munificence
Profusely pour'd her bounties upon woman?
Whence then those charms thy tongue has deign'd to flatter,
That air resistless, and enchanting blush,
Unless the beauteous fabric was design'd
A habitation for a fairer soul?
Mah. Too high, bright maid, thou rat'st exterior grace:
Not always do the fairest flowers diffuse
The richest odours, nor the speckled shells
Conceal the gem; let female arrogance
Observe the feather'd wanderers of the sky;
With purple varied and bedropp'd with gold,
They prune the wing, and spread the glossy plumes,
Ordain'd, like you, to flutter and to shine,
And cheer the weary passenger with music.
Irene. Mean as we are, this tyrant of the world
Implores our smiles, and trembles at our feet.
Whence flow the hopes and fears, despair and rapture,
Whence all the bliss and agonies of love?

Mah. Why, when the balm of sleep descends on man,
Do gay delusions, wandering o'er the brain,
Soothe the delighted soul with empty bliss?
To want give affluence? and to slavery freedom?
Such are love's joys, the lenitives of life,
A fancy'd treasure, and a waking dream.
Irene. Then let me once, in honour of our sex,
Assume the boastful arrogance of man.
The attractive softness, and the endearing smile,
And powerful glance, 'tis granted are our own;
Nor has impartial Nature's frugal hand
Exhausted all her nobler gifts on you.
Do not we share the comprehensive thought,
The enlivening wit, the penetrating reason?
Beats not the female breast with generous passions
The thirst of empire, and the love of glory?
Mah. Illustrious maid, new wonders fix me thine,
Thy soul completes the triumphs of thy face.
I thought (forgive, my fair,) the noblest aim,
The strongest effort of a female soul,
Was but to choose the graces of the day,
To tune the tongue, to teach the eyes to roll,
Dispose the colour of the flowing robe,
And add new roses to the faded cheek.
Will it not charm a mind like thine exalted,
To shine the goddess of applauding nations,
To scatter happiness and plenty round thee,
To bid the prostrate captive rise and live,
To see new cities tower at thy command,
And blasted kingdoms flourish at thy smile?
Irene. Charm'd with the thought of blessing human kind,
Too calm I listen to the flattering sounds.
Mah. O seize the power to bless—Irene's nod
Shall break the fetters of the groaning Christian;
Greece, in her lovely patroness secure.
Shall mourn no more her plunder'd palaces.
Irene. Forbear—O do not urge me to my ruin!
Mah. To state and power I court thee, not to ruin:
Smile on my wishes, and command the globe.
Security shall spread her shield before thee,
And Love enfold thee with her downy wings.
If greatness please thee, mount the imperial seat;
If pleasure charm thee, view this soft retreat;
Here every warbler of the sky shall sing;
Here every fragrance breathe of every spring:
To deck these bowers each region shall combine,
And e'en our Prophet's gardens envy thine:
Empire and love shall share the blissful day,
And varied life steal unperceived away.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

CALI *and* ABDALLA.—CALI *enters with a discontented air; to him enters* ABDALLA.

Cali. Is this the fierce conspirator, Abdalla?
Is this the restless diligence of treason?
Where hast thou linger'd while the encumber'd hours
Fly labouring with the fate of future nations,
And hungry slaughter scents imperial blood?
Abd. Important cares detain'd me from your counsels.
Cali. Some petty passion. some domestic trifle!
Some vain amusement of a vacant soul!
A weeping wife, perhaps, or dying friend,
Hung on your neck, and hinder'd your departure.
Is this a time for softness or for sorrow
Unprofitable, peaceful, female virtues!
When eager vengeance shows a naked foe,
And kind ambition points the way to greatness.
Abd. Must then ambition's votaries infringe
The law of kindness, break the bonds of nature,
And quit the names of brother, friend, and father?
Cali. This sovereign passion, scornful of restraint,
E'en from the birth affects supreme command,
Swells in the breast, and with resistless force
O'erbears each gentler motion of the mind.
As when a deluge overspreads the plains,
The wandering rivulet and silver lake,
Mix undistinguish'd with the general roar.
Abd. Yet can ambition in Abdalla's breast
Claim but the second place: there mighty Love
Has fix'd his hopes, inquietudes, and fears,
His glowing wishes and his jealous pangs.
Cali. Love is indeed the privilege of youth:
Yet on a day like this, when expectation
Pants for the dread event—But let us reason—
Abd. Hast thou grown old amidst the crowd of courts,
And turn'd th' instructive page of human life,
To cant at last, of reason to a lover?
Such ill-timed gravity, such serious folly,
Might well befit the solitary student,
Th' unpractised dervise, or sequester'd faqui.
Know'st thou not yet, when Love invades the soul,
That all her faculties receive his chains?
That Reason gives her sceptre to his hand,
Or only struggles to be more enslaved?
Aspasia, who can look upon thy beauties?
Who hear thee speak, and not abandon reason?
Reason! the hoary dotard's dull directress,
That loses all because she hazards nothing!
Reason! the tim'rous pilot, that, to shun
The rocks of life, for ever flies the port!
Cali. But why this sudden warmth?
Abd. Because I love:
Because my slighted passion burns in vain!
Why roars the lioness distress'd by hunger?
Why foam the swelling waves when tempests rise?
Why shakes the ground when subterraneous fires
Fierce through the bursting caverns rend their way?
Cali. Not till this day thou saw'st this fatal fair
Did ever passion make so swift a progress?
Once more reflect, suppress this infant folly.
Abd. Gross fires, enkindled by a mortal hand,
Spread by degrees, and dread th' oppressing stream;
The subtler flames emitted from the sky
Flash out at once, with strength above resistance,
Cali. How did Aspasia welcome your address?
Did you proclaim this unexpected conquest?
Or pay with speaking eyes a lover's homage?
Abd. Confounded, awed, and lost in admiration,
I gazed, I trembled; but I could not speak;
When e'en as love was breaking off from wonder
And tender accents quivering on my lips,

She mark'd my sparkling eyes, and heaving breast,
And smiling, conscious of her charms, withdrew. [*Enter* Dem. *and* Leon.
Cali. Now be some moments master of thyself;
Nor let Demetrius know thee for a rival.
Hence! or be calm—To disagree is ruin.

SCENE II.

Cali, Demetrius, Leontius, *and* Abdalla.

Dem. When will occasion smile upon our wishes,
And give the tortures of suspense a period?
Still must we linger in uncertain hope?
Still languish in our chains, and dream of freedom,
Like thirsty sailors gazing on the clouds,
Till burning death shoots through their wither'd limbs?
Cali. Deliverance is at hand; for Turkey's tyrant,
Sunk in his pleasures, confident and gay,
With all the hero's dull security,
Trusts to my care his mistress and his life,
And laughs and wantons in the jaws of death.
Leon. So weak is man when destined to destruction!—
The watchful slumber, and the crafty trust.
Cali. At my command yon iron gates unfold;
At my command the sentinels retire;
With all the license of authority, [rooms,
Through bowing slaves, I range the private
And of to-morrow's action fix the scene.
Dem. To-morrow's action! Can that hoary wisdom, [morrow!
Borne down with years, still doat upon to-
That fatal mistress of the young, the lazy,
The coward, and the fool, condemn'd to lose
A useless life in waiting for to-morrow,
To gaze with longing eyes upon to-morrow,
Till interposing death destroys the prospect.
Strange! that this general fraud from day to day
Should fill the world with wretches undetected.
The soldier, labouring through a winter's march,
Still sees to-morrow drest in robes of triumph;
Still to the lover's long-expecting arms
To-morrow brings the visionary bride.
But thou, too old to bear another cheat,
Learn, that the present hour alone is man's.
Leon. The present hour with open arms invites;
Seize the kind fair, and press her to thy bosom.
Dem. Who knows, ere this important morrow rise,
But fear or mutiny may taint the Greeks?
Who knows, if Mahomet's awaking anger
May spare the fatal bowstring till to-morrow!
Abd. Had our first Asian foes but known this ardour,
We still had wander'd on Tartarian hills.
Rouse, Cali; shall the sons of conquer'd Greece
Lead us to danger, and abash their victors?
This night with all her conscious stars be witness,
Who merits most, Demetrius or Abdalla.
Dem. Who merits most!—I knew not we were rivals.
Cali. Young man, forbear—the heat of youth, no more— [fate.
Well,—'tis decreed—This night shall fix our
Soon as the veil of evening clouds the sky,
With cautious secrecy, Leontius, steer
Th' appointed vessel to yon shaded bay,
Form'd by this garden jutting on the deep;
There, with your soldiers arm'd, and sails expanded,
Await our coming, equally prepared
For speedy flight, or obstinate defence.
[*Exit* Leontius

SCENE III.

Cali, Abdalla, *and* Demetrius.

Dem. Now pause, great Bassa, from the thoughts of blood,
And kindly grant an ear to gentler sounds.
If e'er thy youth has known the pangs of absence,
Or felt th' impatience of obstructed love,
Give me, before the approaching hour of fate,
Once to behold the charms of bright Aspasia,
And draw new virtue from her heavenly tongue.
Cali. Let prudence, ere the suit be farther urged,
Impartial weigh the pleasure with the danger.
A little longer, and she's thine for ever.
Dem. Prudence and love conspire in this request,
Lest, unacquainted with our bold attempt,
Surprise o'erwhelm her, and retard our flight.
Cali. What I can grant, you cannot ask in vain—
Dem. I go to wait thy call; this kind consent
Completes the gift of freedom and of life.
[*Exit* Demetrius

SCENE IV.

Cali *and* Abdalla.

Abd. And this is my reward—to burn, to languish,
To rave unheeded; while the happy Greek,
The refuse of our swords, the dross of conquest,
Throws his fond arms about Aspasia's neck,
Dwells on her lips, and sighs upon her breast.
Is't not enough he lives by our indulgence,
But he must live to make his masters wretched?
Cali. What claim hast thou to plead?
Abd. The claim of power,
The unquestion'd claim of conquerors and kings!
Cali. Yet in the use of power remember justice.
Abd. Can then th' assassin lift his treacherous hand
Against his king, and cry, remember justice?
Justice demands the forfeit life of Cali;
Justice demands that I reveal your crimes;
Justice demands—but see th' approaching Sultan!
Oppose my wishes, and—remember justice.
Cali. Disorder sits upon thy face—retire.
[*Exit* Abdalla, *enter* Mahomet

SCENE V.

Cali *and* Mahomet.

Cali. Long be the Sultan bless'd with happy love!
My zeal marks gladness dawning on thy cheek,
With raptures such as fire the Pagan crowds,
When, pale and anxious for their years to come,
They see the sun surmount the dark eclipse,
And hail unanimous their conquering god.
Mah. My vows, 'tis true, she hears with less aversion;
She sighs, she blushes, but she still denies.

Cali. With warmer courtship press the yielding fair;
Call to your aid, with boundless promises,
Each rebel wish, each traitor inclination,
That raises tumults in the female breast,
The love of power, of pleasure, and of show.
Mah. These arts I tried, and, to inflame her more,
By hateful business hurried from her sight,
I bade a hundred virgins wait around her,
Sooth her with all the pleasures of command,
Applaud her charms, and court her to be great.
[*Exit* MAHOMET.

SCENE VI.

Cali. [*Solus.*] He's gone—Here rest, my soul, thy fainting wing,
Here recollect thy dissipated powers.——
Our distant interests, and our different passions,
Now haste to mingle in one common centre,
And fate lies crowded in a narrow space.
Yet in that narrow space what dangers rise!—
Far more I dread Abdalla's fiery folly,
Than all the wisdom of the grave divan.
Reason with reason fights on equal terms;
The raging madman's unconnected schemes
We cannot obviate, for we cannot guess.
Deep in my breast be treasured this resolve,
When Cali mounts the throne, Abdalla dies,
Too fierce, too faithless, for neglect or trust.
[*Enter* IRENE *with Attendants.*

SCENE VII.

CALI, IRENE, ASPASIA, &c.

Cali. Amidst the splendour of encircling beauty,
Superior majesty proclaims thee queen,
And nature justifies our monarch's choice.
Irene. Reserve this homage for some other fair;
Urge me not on to glittering guilt, nor pour
In my weak ear the intoxicating sounds.
Cali. Make haste, bright maid, to rule the willing world;
Awed by the rigour of the Sultan's justice,
We court thy gentleness.
Asp. Can Cali's voice
Concur to press a hapless captive's ruin?
Cali. Long would my zeal for Mahomet and thee
Detain me here. But nations call upon me,
And duty bids me choose a distant walk,
Nor taint with care the privacies of love.

SCENE VIII.

IRENE, ASPASIA, *and Attendants.*

Asp. If yet this shining pomp, these sudden honours,
Swell not thy soul beyond advice or friendship,
Nor yet inspire the follies of a queen,
Or tune thine ear to soothing adulation,
Suspend awhile the privilege of power,
To hear the voice of Truth; dismiss thy train,
Shake off the incumbrances of state a moment,
And lay the towering sultaness aside,
[IRENE *signs to her Attendants to retire.*
While I foretell thy fate; that office done,—
No more I boast the ambitious name of friend,
But sink among thy slaves without a murmur.
Irene. Did regal diadems invest my brow,
Yet should my soul still faithful to her choice
Esteem Aspasia's breast the noblest kingdom.
Asp. The soul, once tainted with so foul a crime,
[ardour:
No more shall glow with friendship's hallow'd
These holy beings, whose superior care
Guides erring mortals to the paths of virtue,
Affrighted at impiety like thine,
Resign their charge to baseness and to ruin.
Irene. Upbraid me not with fancied wickedness;
I am not yet a queen or an apostate.
But should I sin beyond the hope of mercy,
If, when religion prompts me to refuse,
The dread of instant death restrains my tongue?
Asp. Reflect that life and death, affecting sounds!
Are only varied modes of endless being;
Reflect that life, like every other blessing,
Derives its value from its use alone;
Not for itself but for a nobler end,
The Eternal gave it, and that end is virtue.
When inconsistent with a greater good,
Reason commands to cast the less away;
Thus life, with loss of wealth is well-preserved,
And virtue cheaply saved with loss of life.
Irene. If built on settled thought, this constancy
Not idly flutters on a boastful tongue,
Why, when destruction raged around our walls,
Why fled this haughty heroine from the battle?
Why then did not this warlike Amazon
Mix in the war, and shine among the heroes?
Asp. Heaven, when its hand pour'd softness on our limbs,
Unfit for toil, and polish'd into weakness,
Made passive fortitude the praise of woman·
Our only arms are innocence and meekness.
Not then with raving cries I fill'd the city;
But, while Demetrius, dear lamented name!
Pour'd storms of fire upon our fierce invaders,
Implored the Eternal Power to shield my country,
With silent sorrows, and with calm devotion.
Irene. O! did Irene shine the queen of Turkey,
No more should Greece lament those prayers rejected;
Again should golden splendour grace her cities.
Again her prostrate palaces should rise,
Again her temples sound with holy music:
No more should danger fright, or want distress
The smiling widows, and protected orphans.
Asp. Be virtuous ends pursued by virtuous means,
Nor think the intention sanctifies the deed:
That maxim, published in an impious age,
Would loose the wild enthusiast to destroy,
And fix the fierce usurper's bloody title;
Then Bigotry might send her slaves to war,
And bid success become the test of truth:
Unpitying massacre might waste the world,
And persecution boast the call of Heaven.
Irene. Shall I not wish to cheer afflicted kings,
And plan the happiness of mourning millions?
Asp. Dream not of power thou never canst attain:
When social laws first harmonized the world,
Superior man possess'd the charge of rule,
The scale of justice, and the sword of power,
Nor left us aught but flattery and state.
Irene. To me my lover's fondness will restore
Whate'er man's pride has ravish'd from our sex.
Asp. When soft security shall prompt the Sultan
Freed from the tumults of unsettled conquest
To fix his court, and regulate his pleasures,

Soon shall the dire seraglio's horrid gates
Close like the eternal bars of death upon thee.
Immured and buried in perpetual sloth,
That gloomy slumber of the stagnant soul,
There shalt thou view from far the quiet cottage,
And sigh for cheerful poverty in vain;
There wear the tedious hours of life away,
Beneath each curse of unrelenting Heaven,
Despair and slavery, solitude and guilt.

Irene. There shall we find the yet untasted bliss
Of grandeur and tranquillity combined.

Asp. Tranquillity and guilt, disjoin'd by Heaven,
Still stretch in vain their longing arms afar;
Nor dare to pass th' insuperable bound.
Ah! let me rather seek the convent's cell;
There when my thoughts, at interval of prayer,
Descend to range these mansions of misfortune,
Oft shall I dwell on our disastrous friendship,
And shed the pitying tear for lost Irene.

Irene. Go, languish on in dull obscurity;
Thy dazzled soul, with all its boasted greatness,
Shrinks at the o'erpowering gleams of regal state,
Stoops from the blaze like a degenerate eagle,
And flies for shelter to the shades of life.

Asp. On me should Providence, without a crime,
The weighty charge of royalty confer,
Call me to civilize the Russian wilds,
Or bid soft science polish Britain's heroes:
Soon should'st thou see, how false thy weak reproach.
My bosom feels, enkindled from the sky,
The lambent flames of mild benevolence,
Untouch'd by fierce ambition's raging fires.

Irene. Ambition is the stamp impress'd by Heaven
To mark the noblest minds; with active heat
Inform'd they mount the precipice of power,
Grasp at command, and tower in quest of empire;
While vulgar souls compassionate their cares,
Gaze at their height, and tremble at their danger:
Thus meaner spirits with amazement mark
The varying seasons, and revolving skies,
And ask, what guilty Power's rebellious hand
Rolls with eternal toil the ponderous orbs;
While some archangel, nearer to perfection,
In easy state presides o'er all their motions,
Directs the planets with a careless nod,
Conducts the sun, and regulates the spheres.

Asp. Well may'st thou hide in labyrinths of sound [voice.
The cause that shrinks from Reason's powerful
Stoop from thy flight, trace back th' entangled thought,
And set the glittering fallacy to view.
Not power I blame, but power obtain'd by crime;
Angelic greatness is angelic virtue.
Amidst the glare of courts, the shout of armies,
Will not th' apostate feel the pangs of guilt,
And wish, too late, for innocence and peace?
Curst as the tyrant of th' infernal realms,
With gloomy state and agonizing pomp!

SCENE IX.

Irene, Aspasia, *and* Maid.

Maid. A Turkish stranger of majestic mien,
Asks at the gate admission to Aspasia,
Commission'd, as he says, by Cali Bassa.

Irene. Whoe'er thou art or whatsoe'er thy message, [*Aside.*
Thanks for this kind relief—With speed admit him. [ever;

Asp. He comes, perhaps, to separate us for
Whom I am gone, remember, O! remember,
That none are great, or happy, but the virtuous.
[*Exit* Irene; *enter* Demetrius.

SCENE X.

Aspasia *and* Demetrius.

Dem. 'Tis she—my hope, my happiness, my love!
Aspasia! do I once again behold thee?
Still, still the same—unclouded by misfortune!
Let my blest eyes for ever gaze———

Asp. Demetrius!

Dem. Why does the blood forsake thy lovely cheek? [nerves?
Why shoots this chillness through thy shaking
Why does thy soul retire into herself?
Recline upon my breast thy sinking beauties:
Revive—Revive, to freedom and to love.

Asp. What well-known voice pronounced the grateful sounds
Freedom and love? Alas! I'm all confusion,
A sudden mist o'ercasts my darken'd soul;
The present, past, and future, swim before me,
Lost in a wild perplexity of joy.

Dem. Such ecstacy of love, such pure affection,
What worth can merit? or what faith reward?

Asp. A thousand thoughts, imperfect and distracted,
Demand a voice, and struggle into birth;
A thousand questions press upon my tongue,
But all give way to rapture and Demetrius.

Dem. O say, bright Being, in this age of absence, [known?
What fears, what griefs, what dangers hast thou
Say, how the tyrant threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd!
Say, how he threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd in vain!
Say, how the hand of Violence was raised!
Say, how thou call'dst in tears upon Demetrius!

Asp. Inform me rather how thy happy courage
Stemm'd in the breach the deluge of destruction.
And pass'd uninjured through the walks of death.
Did savage anger and licentious conquest
Behold the hero with Aspasia's eyes?
And, thus protected in the general ruin,
O say, what guardian power convey'd thee hither. [chances,

Dem. Such strange events, such unexpected
Beyond my warmest hope, or wildest wishes,
Concurr'd to give me to Aspasia's arms,
I stand amazed, and ask, if yet I clasp thee.

Asp. Sure heaven (for wonders are not wrought in vain!)
That joins us thus, will never part us more!

SCENE XI.

Demetrius, Aspasia, *and* Abdalla.

Abd. It parts you now—The hasty Sultan sign'd
The laws unread, and flies to his Irene.

Dem. Fix'd and intent on his Irene's charms,
He envies none the converse of Aspasia.

Abd. Aspasia's absence will inflame suspicion!
She cannot, must not, shall not, linger here;
Prudence and Friendship bid me force her from you.

Dem. Force her! profane her with a touch, and die! [hence;
Abd. 'Tis Greece, 'tis Freedom, calls Aspasia
Your careless love betrays your country's cause.
Dem. If we must part——
Asp. No! let us die together.
Dem. If we must part——
Abd. Despatch; th' increasing danger
Will not admit a lover's long farewell,
The long-drawn intercourse of sighs and kisses.
Dem. Then—O my fair, I cannot bid thee go.
Receive her and protect her, gracious Heaven!
Yet let me watch her dear departing steps,
If Fate pursues me, let it find me here.
Reproach not, Greece, a lover's fond delays,
Nor think thy cause neglected while I gaze;
New force, new courage, from each glance I gain,
And find our passions not infused in vain.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Demetrius *and* Aspasia, *enter as talking.*

Asp. Enough—resistless Reason calms my soul—
Approving Justice smiles upon your cause,
And Nature's rights entreat th' asserting sword.
Yet, when your hand is lifted to destroy,
Think, but excuse a woman's needless caution—
Purge well thy mind from every private passion,
Drive interest, love, and vengeance from thy thoughts, [Virtue,
Fill all thy ardent breast with Greece and
Then strike secure, and Heaven assist the blow!
Dem. Thou kind assistant of my better angel,
Propitious guide of my bewilder'd soul,
Calm of my cares, and guardian of my virtue!
Asp. My soul, first kindled by thy bright example,
To noble thought and generous emulation,
Now but reflects those beams that flow'd from thee. [greatness,
Dem. With native lustre and unborrow'd
Thou shinest, bright maid, superior to distress;
Unlike the trifling race of vulgar beauties,
Those glittering dew-drops of a vernal morn,
That spread their colours to the genial beam,
And sparkling quiver to the breath of May;
But, when the tempest with sonorous wing
Sweeps o'er the grove, forsake the labouring bough,
Dispersed in air, or mingled with the dust.
Asp. Forbear this triumph—still new conflicts wait us,
Foes unforeseen, and dangers unsuspected.
Oft, when the fierce besiegers' eager host
Beholds the fainting garrison retire,
And rushes joyful to the naked wall,
Destruction flashes from the insidious mine,
And sweeps the exulting conqueror away.
Perhaps in vain the Sultan's anger spared me,
To find a meaner fate from treacherous friendship—
Abdalla!— [Abdalla then dissemble?
Dem. Can
That fiery chief, renown'd for generous freedom,
For zeal unguarded, undissembled hate,
For daring truth, and turbulence of honour!
Asp. This open friend, this undesigning hero,
With noisy falsehoods forced me from your arms,
To shock my virtue with a tale of love.
Dem. Did not the cause of Greece restrain my sword,
Aspasia could not fear a second insult.
Asp. His pride and love by turns inspired his tongue,
And intermix'd my praises with his own;
His wealth, his rank, his honours, he recounted,
Till, in the midst of arrogance and fondness,
Th' approaching Sultan forced me from the palace;
Then, while he gazed upon his yielding mistress,
I stole unheeded from their ravish'd eyes,
And sought this happy grove in quest of thee.
Dem. Soon may the final stroke decide our fate,
Lest baneful discord crush our infant scheme,
And strangled freedom perish in the birth.
Asp. My bosom, harass'd with alternate passions,
Now hopes, now fears—— [sions,
Dem. The anxieties of love.
Asp. Think how the Sovereign Arbiter of kingdoms
Detests thy false associates' black designs,
And frowns on perjury, revenge, and murder
Embark'd with treason on the seas of fate,
When Heaven shall bid the swelling billows rage,
And point vindictive lightnings at rebellion,
Will not the patriot share the traitor's danger?
Oh could thy hand unaided free thy country?
Nor mingled guilt pollute the sacred cause!
Dem. Permitted oft, though not inspired by Heaven,
Successful treasons punish impious kings
Asp. Nor end my terrors with the Sultan's death;
Far as futurity's untravell'd waste
Lies open to conjecture's dubious ken,
On every side confusion, rage, and death,
Perhaps the phantoms of a woman's fear,
Beset the treacherous way with fatal ambush;
Each Turkish bosom burns for thy destruction,
Ambitious Cali dreads the statesman's arts,
And hot Abdalla hates the happy lover.
Dem. Capricious man! to good and ill inconstant,
Too much to fear or trust is equal weakness.
Sometimes the wretch, unawed by heaven or hell,
With mad devotion idolizes honour.
The Bassa, reeking with his master's murder,
Perhaps may start at violated friendship.
Asp. How soon, alas! will interest, fear, or envy,
O'erthrow such weak, such accidental, virtue,
Nor built on faith, nor fortified by conscience?
Dem. When desperate ills demand a speedy cure,
Distrust is cowardice, and prudence folly.
Asp. Yet think a moment, ere you court destruction, [Demetrius,
What hand, when death has snatch'd away
Shall guard Aspasia from triumphant lust.
Dem. Dismiss these needless fears—a troop of Greeks,
Well known, long try'd, expect us on the shore.
Borne on the surface of the smiling deep,
Soon shalt thou scorn, in safety's arms reposed,
Abdalla's rage and Cali's stratagems.
Asp. Still, still, distrust sits heavy on my heart;
Will e'er a happier hour revisit Greece?

Dem. Should Heaven, yet unappeased, refuse its aid,
Disperse our hopes, and frustrate our designs,
Yet shall the conscience of the great attempt
Diffuse a brightness on our future days;
Nor will his country's groans reproach Demetrius.
But how canst thou support the woes of exile?
Canst thou forget hereditary splendours,
To live obscure upon a foreign coast,
Content with science, innocence, and love?

Asp. Nor wealth, nor titles, make Aspasia's bliss.
O'erwhelm'd and lost amidst the public ruins,
Unmoved I saw the glittering trifles perish,
And thought the petty dross beneath a sigh.
Cheerful I follow to the rural cell;
Love be my wealth, and my distinction virtue.

Dem. Submissive, and prepared for each event,
Now let us wait the last award of Heaven,
Secure of happiness from flight or conquest,
Nor fear the fair and learn'd can want protection.
The mighty Tuscan courts the banish'd arts
To kind Italia's hospitable shades;
There shall soft leisure wing the excursive soul,
And peace propitious smile on soft desire;
There shall despotic Eloquence resume
Her ancient empire o'er the yielding heart;
There Poetry shall tune her sacred voice,
And wake from ignorance the Western world.

SCENE II.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, *and* CALI.

Cali. At length the unwilling sun resigns the world
To silence and to rest. The hours of darkness,
Propitious hours to stratagem and death,
Pursue the last remains of lingering light.

Dem. Count not these hours as parts of vulgar time,
Think them a sacred treasure lent by Heaven,
Which, squander'd by neglect, or fear, or folly,
No prayer recalls, no diligence redeems.
To-morrow's dawn shall see the Turkish king
Stretch'd in the dust, or towering on his throne;
To-morrow's dawn shall see the mighty Cali,
The sport of tyranny, or lord of nations.

Cali. Then waste no longer these important moments
In soft endearments and in gentle murmurs;
Nor lose in love the patriot and the hero.

Dem. 'Tis love, combined with guilt alone, that melts
The soften'd soul to cowardice and sloth;
But virtuous passion prompts the great resolve,
And fans the slumbering spark of heavenly fire.
Retire, my fair; that Power that smiles on goodness
Guide all thy steps, calm every stormy thought,
And still thy bosom with the voice of peace!

Asp. Soon may we meet again, secure and free,
To feel no more the pangs of separation! [*Exit.*

DEMETRIUS *and* CALI.

Dem. This night alone is ours—Our mighty foe,
No longer lost in amorous solitude,
Will now remount the slighted seat of empire,
And show Irene to the shouting people:
Aspasia left her sighing in his arms,
And listening to the pleasing tale of power;
With soften'd voice she dropp'd the faint refusal,
Smiling consent she sat, and blushing love.

Cali. Now, tyrant, with satiety of beauty,
Now feast thine eyes, thine eyes that ne'er hereafter
Shall dart their amorous glances at the fair,
Or glare on Cali with malignant beams.

SCENE III.

DEMETRIUS, CALI, LEONTIUS, *and* ABDALLA.

Leon. Our bark unseen has reach'd th' appointed bay,
And where yon trees wave o'er the foaming surge,
Reclines against the shore; our Grecian troop
Extends its lines along the sandy beach,
Elate with hope, and panting for a foe.

Abd. The favouring winds assist the great design,
Sport in our sails, and murmur o'er the deep.

Cali. 'Tis well—A single blow completes our wishes;
Return with speed, Leontius, to your charge;
The Greeks, disorder'd by their leader's absence,
May droop dismay'd, or kindle into madness.

Leon. Suspected still!—What villain's pois'nous hood
Dares join Leontius' name with fear or falsehood?
Have I for this preserved my guiltless bosom
Pure as the thoughts of infant innocence?
Have I for this defy'd the chiefs of Turkey,
Intrepid in the flaming front of war?

Cali. Hast thou not search'd my soul's profoundest thoughts?
Is not the fate of Greece and Cali thine?

Leon. Why has thy choice then pointed out Leontius,
Unfit to share this night's illustrious toils?
To wait remote from action and from honour,
An idle listener to the distant cries
Of slaughter'd infidels, and clash of swords?
Tell me the cause, that while thy name, Demetrius,
Shall soar triumphant on the wings of Glory,
Despised and cursed, Leontius must descend
Through hissing ages, a proverbial coward,
The tale of women, and the scorn of fools?

Dem. Can brave Leontius be the slave of Glory?
Glory, the casual gift of thoughtless crowds!
Glory, the bribe of avaricious virtue!
Be but my country free, be thine the praise;
I ask no witness, but attesting conscience,
No records, but the records of the sky.

Leon. Will thou then head the troop upon the shore,
While I destroy the oppressor of mankind?

Dem. What canst thou boast superior to Demetrius? [cause,
Ask to whose sword the Greeks will trust their
My name shall echo through the shouting field:
Demand whose force yon Turkish heroes dread,
The shuddering camp shall murmur out Demetrius.

Cali. Must Greece, still wretched by her children's folly,
For ever mourn their avarice or factions?
Demetrius justly pleads a double title;
The lover's interest aids the patriot's claim.

Leon. My pride shall ne'er protract my country's woes;
Succeed, my friend, unenvied by Leontius.

Dem. I feel new spirit shoot along my nerves,
My soul expands to meet the approaching freedom.
Now hover o'er us with propitious wings,
Ye sacred shades of patriots and of martyrs!
All ye, whose blood tyrannic rage effused,
Or persecution drank, attend our call;
And from the mansions of perpetual peace
Descend, to sweeten labours once your own!

Cali. Go then, and with united eloquence
Confirm your troops; and when the moon's fair beam
Plays on the quivering waves, to guide our flight,
Return, Demetrius, and be free for ever.

[*Exeunt* DEM. *and* LEON.

SCENE IV.

CALI *and* ABDALLA.

Abd. How the new monarch, swell'd with airy rule, [height,
Looks down, contemptuous, from his fancied
And utters fate, unmindful of Abdalla!

Cali. Far be such black ingratitude from Cali!
When Asia's nations own me for their lord,
Wealth, and command, and grandeur, shall be thine.

Abd. Is this the recompense reserved for me?
Dar'st thou thus dally with Abdalla's passion?
Henceforward hope no more my slighted friendship, [tortures,
Wake from thy dream of power to death and
And bid thy visionary throne farewell.

Cali. Name, and enjoy thy wish—

Abd. I need not name it;
Aspasia's lovers know but one desire,
Nor hope, nor wish, nor live but for Aspasia.

Cali. That fatal beauty, plighted to Demetrius,
Heaven makes not mine to give. [
Abd. Nor to deny.

Cali. Obtain her, and possess; thou know'st thy rival. [plains,

Abd. Too well I know him, since on Thracia's
I felt the force of his tempestuous arm,
And saw my scatter'd squadrons fly before him.
Nor will I trust th' uncertain chance of combat;
The rights of princes let the sword decide,
The petty claims of empire and of honour:
Revenge and subtle jealousy shall teach
A surer passage to his hated heart.

Cali. O spare the gallant Greek, in him we lose
The politician's arts, and hero's flame.

Abd. When next we meet before we storm the palace,
The bowl shall circle to confirm our league;
Then shall these juices taint Demetrius' draught,
[*Showing a phial.*
And stream destructive through his freezing veins:
Thus shall he live to strike th' important blow,
And perish ere he taste the joys of conquest.

SCENE V.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, CALI, *and* ABDALLA.

Mah. Henceforth for ever happy be this day,
Sacred to love, to pleasure, and Irene!
The matchless fair has bless'd me with compliance;
Let every tongue resound Irene's praise,
And spread the general transport through mankind.

Cali. Blest prince, for whom indulgent Heaven ordains
At once the joys of paradise and empire,
Now join thy people's and thy Cali's prayers;
Suspend thy passage to the seats of bliss,
Nor wish for Houries in Irene's arms.

Mah. Forbear—I know the long-try'd faith of Cali. [Heaven,

Cali. O! could the eyes of kings, like those of
Search to the dark recesses of the soul,
Oft would they find ingratitude and treason,
By smiles, and oaths, and praises, ill disguised.
How rarely would they meet, in crowded courts,
Fidelity so firm, so pure, as mine!

Mus. Yet, ere we give our loosen'd thoughts to rapture,
Let prudence obviate an impending danger:
Tainted by sloth, the parent of sedition,
The hungry Janizary burns for plunder,
And growls in private o'er his idle sabre.

Mah. To still their murmurs, ere the twentieth sun
Shall shed his beams upon the bridal bed,
I rouse to war, and conquer for Irene.
Then shall the Rhodian mourn his sinking towers,
And Buda fall, and proud Vienna tremble
Then shall Venetia feel the Turkish power.
And subject seas roar round their queen in vain.

Abd. Then seize fair Italy's delightful coast,
To fix your standard in imperial Rome.

Mah. Her sons malicious clemency shall spare,
To form new legends, sanctify new crimes,
To canonize the slaves of superstition,
And fill the world with follies and impostures,
Till angry Heaven shall mark them out for ruin,
And war o'erwhelm them in their dream of vice.
O, could her fabled saints and boasted prayers
Call forth her ancient heroes to the field,
How should I joy, 'midst the fierce shock of nations,
To cross the towerings of an equal soul,
And bid the master genius rule the world!
Abdalla, Cali, go—proclaim my purpose.

[*Exeunt* CALI *and* ABDALLA.

SCENE VI.

MAHOMET *and* MUSTAPHA.

Mah. Still Cali lives: and must he live tomorrow?
That fawning villain's forced congratulations
Will cloud my triumphs, and pollute the day.

Mus. With cautious vigilance, at my command,
Two faithful captains, Hazan and Caraza,
Pursue him through his labyrinths of treason,
And wait your summons to report his conduct.

Mah. Call them—but let them not prolong their tale,
Nor press too much upon a lover's patience.

[*Exit* MUSTAPHA.

SCENE VII.

Mah. [*Solus.*] Whome'er the hope, still blasted, still renew'd,
Of happiness lures on from toil to toil,
Remember Mahomet, and cease thy labour.
Behold him here, in love, in war successful,
Behold him wretched, in his double triumph!
His favourite faithless, and his mistress base.
Ambition only gave her to my arms,

By reason not convinced, nor won by love.
Ambition was her crime; but meaner folly
Dooms me to loathe at once, and doat on falsehood,
And idolize th' apostate I contemn.
If thou art more than the gay dream of fancy,
More than a pleasing sound without a meaning,
O happiness! sure thou art all Aspasia's.

SCENE VIII.

Mahomet, Mustapha, Hasan, *and* Caraza.

Mah. Caraza, speak—have ye remark'd the Bassa? [his steps;
Car. Close, as we might unseen, we watch'd
His hair disorder'd, and his gait unequal,
Betray'd the wild emotions of his mind.
Sudden he stops, and inward turns his eyes,
Absorb'd in thought; then starting from his trance,
Constrains a sullen smile, and shoots away.
With him Abdalla we beheld—
Mus. Abdalla!
Mah. He wears of late resentment on his brow.
Deny'd the government of Servia's province.
Car. We mark'd him storming in excess of fury,
And heard, within the thicket that conceal'd us,
An undistinguish'd sound of threatening rage.
Mus. How guilt, once harbour'd in the conscious breast,
Intimidates the brave, degrades the great;
See Cali, dread of kings, and pride of armies,
By treason levell'd with the dregs of men!
Ere guilty fear depress'd the hoary chief,
An angry murmur, a rebellious frown,
Had stretch'd the fiery boaster in the grave.
Mah. Shall monarchs fear to draw the sword of justice, [strain'd?
Awed by the crowd, and by their slaves re-
Seize him this night, and through the private passage
Convey him to the prison's inmost depths,
Reserved to all the pangs of tedious death.
[*Exeunt* Mahomet *and* Mustapha.

SCENE IX.

Hasan *and* Caraza.

Has. Shall then the Greeks, unpunish'd and conceal'd,
Contrive perhaps the ruin of our empire,
League with our chiefs, and propagate sedition?
Car. Whate'er their scheme, the Bassa's death defeats it,
And gratitude's strong ties restrain my tongue.
Has. What ties to slaves? what gratitude to foes?
Car. In that black day when slaughter'd thousands fell
Around these fatal walls, the tide of war
Bore me victorious onward, where Demetrius
Tore unresisted from the giant hand
Of stern Sebalias the triumphant crescent,
And dash'd the might of Asam from the ramparts.
There I became, nor blush to make it known,
The captive of his sword. The coward Greeks,
Enraged by wrongs, exulting with success,
Doom'd me to die with all the Turkish captains;
But brave Demetrius scorn'd the mean revenge,
And gave me life.
Has. Do thou repay the gift,
Lest unrewarded mercy lose its charms.
Profuse of wealth, or bounteous of success,
When Heaven bestows the privilege to bless;
Let no weak doubt the generous hand restrain,
For when was power beneficent in vain?
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Asp. [*Solus.*] In these dark moments of suspended fate,
While yet the future fortune of my country,
Lies in the womb of Providence conceal'd,
And anxious angels wait the mighty birth;
O grant thy sacred influence, powerful Virtue!
Attentive rise, survey the fair creation,
Till, conscious of th' encircling Deity,
Beyond the mists of care thy pinion towers.
This calm, these joys, dear Innocence! are thine; [pire.
Joys ill exchanged for gold, and pride, and em-
[*Enter* Irene *and Attendants.*

SCENE II.

Aspasia, Irene, *and Attendants.*

Irene. See how the moon through all th' unclouded sky
Spreads her mild radiance, and descending dews
Revive the languid flowers; thus nature shone
New from the Maker's hand, and fair array'd
In the bright colours of primeval spring;
When purity, while fraud was yet unknown,
Play'd fearless in th' inviolated shades.
This elemental joy, this general calm,
Is sure the smile of unoffended Heaven.
Yet! why—
Maid. Behold within th' embowering grove,
Aspasia stands—
Irene. With melancholy mien,
Pensive and envious of Irene's greatness.
Steal unperceived upon her meditations—
But see, the lofty maid, at our approach,
Resumes th' imperious air of haughty virtue.
Are these th' unceasing joys, th' unmingled pleasures [*To* Aspasia.
For which Aspasia scorn'd the Turkish crown?
Is this th' unshaken confidence in Heaven?
Is this the boasted bliss of conscious virtue?
When did Content sigh out her cares in secret?
When did Felicity repine in deserts?
Asp. Ill suits with guilt the gayeties of triumph;
When daring Vice insults eternal Justice,
The ministers of wrath forget compassion,
And snatch the flaming bolt with hasty hand.
Irene. Forbear thy threats, proud Propheteſs of ill,
Versed in the secret counsels of the sky.
Asp. Forbear! But thou art sunk beneath reproach;
In vain affected raptures flush the cheek,
And songs of pleasure warble from the tongue,
When fear and anguish labour in the breast,
And all within is darkness and confusion.
Thus on deceitful Ætna's flowery side
Unfading virtue glads the roving eye,
While secret flames, with unextinguish'd rage

Insatiate on her wasted entrails prey,
And melt her treacherous beauties into ruin.
[*Enter* Demetrius.

SCENE III.

Aspasia, Irene, *and* Demetrius.

Dem. Fly, fly, my love! destruction rushes on us,
The rack expects us, and the sword pursues.
Asp. Is Greece deliver'd? Is the tyrant fallen?
Dem. Greece is no more; the prosperous tyrant lives,
Reserved for other lands, the scourge of Heaven.
Asp. Say, by what fraud, what force, were you defeated?
Betray'd by falsehood, or by crowds o'erborne?
Dem. The pressing exigence forbids relation.
Abdalla———
Asp. Hated name! his jealous rage
Broke out in perfidy—O cursed Aspasia,
Born to complete the ruin of her country!
Hide me, oh hide me from upbraiding Greece;
Oh, hide me from myself!
Dem. Be fruitless grief
The doom of guilt alone, nor dare to seize
The breast where Virtue guards the throne of Peace,
Devolve, dear maid, thy sorrows on the wretch,
Whose fear, or rage, or treachery, betray'd us!
Irene. [*Aside.*] A private station may discover more;
Then let me rid them of Irene's presence;
Proceed, and give a loose to love and treason.
Withdraws.
Asp. Yet tell.
Dem. To tell or hear were waste of life.
Asp. The life, which only this design supported,
Were now well lost in hearing how you fail'd.
Dem. Or meanly fraudulent, or madly gay,
Abdalla, while we waited near the palace,
With ill-timed mirth proposed the bowl of love.
Just as it reach'd my lips, a sudden cry
Urged me to dash it to the ground untouch'd,
And seize my sword with disencumber'd hand.
Asp. What cry? The stratagem? Did then Abdalla—
Dem. At once a thousand passions fired his cheek!
Then all is past, he cried—and darted from us;
Nor at the call of Cali deign'd to turn.
Asp. Why did you stay, deserted and betray'd?
What more could force attempt, or art contrive?
Dem. Amazement seiz'd us, and the hoary Bassa
Stood torpid in suspense; but soon Abdalla
Return'd with force that made resistance vain,
And bade his new confederates seize the traitors.
Cali, disarm'd, was borne away to death;
Myself escaped, or favour'd, or neglected.
Asp. O Greece! renown'd for science and for wealth,
Behold thy boasted honours snatch'd away.
Dem. Though disappointment blast our general scheme,
Yet much remains to hope. I shall not call
The day disastrous that secures our flight:
Nor think that effort lost which rescues thee.
[*Enter* Abdalla.

SCENE IV.

Irene, Aspasia, Demetrius, *and* Abdalla.

Abd. At length the prize is mine—The haughty maid
That bears the fate of empires in her air,
Henceforth shall live for me; for me alone
Shall plume her charms, and, with attentive watch,
Steal from Abdalla's eye the sign to smile.
Dem. Cease this wild roar of savage exultation·
Advance, and perish in the frantic boast.
Asp. Forbear, Demetrius, 'tis Aspasia calls thee;
Thy love, Aspasia, calls: restrain thy sword;
Nor rush on useless wounds with idle courage.
Dem. What now remains?
Asp. It now remains to fly!
Dem. Shall then the savage live, to boast his insult?
Tell how Demetrius shunn'd his single hand,
And stole his life and mistress from his sabre?
Abd. Infatuate loiterer, has Fate in vain
Unclasp'd his iron gripe to set thee free?
Still dost thou flutter in the jaws of death;
Snared with thy fears, and mazed in stupefaction? [calls:
Dem. Forgive, my fair: 'tis life, 'tis nature
Now, traitor, feel the fear that chills my hand.
Asp. 'Tis madness to provoke superfluous danger,
And cowardice to dread the boast of folly.
Abd. Fly, wretch, while yet my pity grants thee flight,
The power of Turkey waits upon my call.
Leave but this maid, resign a hopeless claim,
And drag away thy life in scorn and safety,
Thy life, too mean a prey to lure Abdalla.
Dem. Once more I dare thy sword; behold the prize,
Behold I quit her to the chance of battle.
[*Quitting* Aspasia.
Abd. Well may'st thou call thy master to the combat,
And try the hazard, that hast nought to stake;
Alike my death or thine is gain to thee;
But soon thou shalt repent; another moment
Shall throw th' attending janizaries round thee.
[*Exit hastily* Abdalla.

SCENE V.

Aspasia, Irene, *and* Demetrius.

Irene. Abdalla fails; now Fortune, all is mine.
[*Aside.*
Haste, Murza, to the palace, let the sultan
[*To one of her Attendants.*
Despatch his guards to stop the flying traitors,
While I protract their stay. Be swift and faithful. [*Exit* Murza.
This lucky stratagem shall charm the Sultan,
[*Aside.*
Secure his confidence, and fix his love.
Dem. Behold a boaster's worth! Now snatch, my fair,
The happy moment; hasten to the shore,
Ere he return with thousands at his side.
Asp. In vain I listen to th' inviting call
Of freedom and of love; my trembling joints,
Relax'd with fear, refuse to bear me forward.
Depart, Demetrius, lest my fate involve thee;
Forsake a wretch abandon'd to despair,
To share the miseries herself has caused.

Dem. Let us not struggle with th' eternal will,
Nor languish o'er irreparable ruins;
Come, haste and live—Thy innocence and truth
Shall bless our wanderings, and propitiate Heaven. [nerves
Irene. Press not her flight, while yet her feeble
Refuse their office, and uncertain life
Still labours with imaginary wo;
Here let me tend her with officious care,
Watch each unquiet flutter of the breast,
And joy to feel the vital warmth return,
To see the cloud forsake her kindling cheek,
And hail the rosy dawn of rising health.
Asp. Oh! rather, scornful of flagitious greatness,
Resolve to share our dangers and our toils,
Companion of our flight, illustrious exile,
Leave slavery, guilt, and infamy behind.
Irene. My soul attends thy voice, and banish'd Virtue
Strives to regain her empire of the mind:
Assist her efforts with thy strong persuasion!
Sure 'tis the happy hour ordain'd above,
When vanquish'd Vice shall tyrannize no more.
Dem. Remember peace and anguish are before thee,
And honour and reproach, and Heaven and Hell.
Asp. Content with freedom, and precarious greatness.
Dem. Now make thy choice, while yet the power of choice
Kind Heaven affords thee, and inviting Mercy
Holds out her hand to lead thee back to truth.
Irene. Stay—in this dubious twilight of conviction,
The gleams of reason, and the clouds of passion,
Irradiate and obscure my breast by turns:
Stay but a moment, and prevailing truth
Will spread resistless light upon my soul.
Dem. But since none knows the danger of a moment,
And Heaven forbids to lavish life away,
Let kind compulsion terminate the contest.
[*Seizing her hand.*
Ye Christian captives follow me to freedom:
A galley waits us, and the winds invite.
Irene. Whence is this violence?
Dem. Your calmer thought,
Will teach a gentler term.
Irene. Forbear this rudeness,
And learn the reverence due to Turkey's queen;
Fly, slaves, and call the Sultan to my rescue.
Dem. Farewell, unhappy maid; may every joy
Be thine, that wealth can give, or guilt receive!
Asp. And when contemptuous of imperial power,
Disease shall chase the phantoms of ambition,
May penitence attend thy mournful bed,
And wing thy latest prayer to pitying Heaven.
[*Exeunt* DEM. *and* ASP. *with part of the Attendants.*

SCENE VI.

IRENE *walks at a distance from her Attendants.*

Irene. [*After a pause.*] Against the head which innocence secures,
Insidious Malice aims her darts in vain,
Turn'd backwards by the powerful breath of Heaven.
Perhaps even now the lovers unpursued
Bound o'er the sparkling waves. Go, happy bark,
Thy sacred freight shall still the raging main.
To guide thy passage shall th' aerial spirits
Fill all the starry lamps with double blaze;
Th' applauding sky shall pour forth all its beams,
To grace the triumph of victorious virtue;
While I, not yet familiar to my crimes,
Recoil from thought, and shudder at myself.
How am I changed! How lately did Irene
Fly from the busy pleasures of her sex,
Well pleased to search the treasures of remembrance,
And live her guiltless moments o'er anew!
Come, let us seek new pleasures in the palace,
[*To her Attendants going off.*
Till soft fatigue invites us to repose.

SCENE VII.

Enter MUSTAPHA, *meeting and stopping her.*

Mus. Fair Falsehood, stay.
Irene. What dream of sudden power
Has taught my slave the language of command!
Henceforth be wise, nor hope a second pardon.
Mus. Who calls for pardon from a wretch condemn'd?
Irene. Thy look, thy speech, thy action, all is wildness—
Who charges guilt on me? [science.
Mus. Who charges guilt! [science.
Ask of thy heart; attend the voice of Con-
Who charges guilt! lay by this proud resentment
That fires thy cheek, and elevates thy mien,
Nor thus usurp the dignity of virtue.
Review this day.
Irene. Whate'er thy accusation,
The Sultan is my judge.
Mus. That hope is past;
Hard was the strife of justice and of love;
But now 'tis o'er, and justice has prevail'd.
Know'st thou not Cali? know'st thou not Demetrius? [them traitors.
Irene. Bold slave, I know them both—I know
Mus. Perfidious!—yes—too well thou know'st them traitors. [Irene.
Irene. Their treason throws no stain upon
This day has proved my fondness for the Sultan:
He knew Irene's truth.
Mus. The Sultan knows it,
He knows how near apostacy to treason—
But 'tis not mine to judge—I scorn and leave thee.
I go, lest vengeance urge my hand to blood,
To blood too mean to stain a soldier's sabre.
[*Exit* MUSTAPHA.
Irene. [*To her Attendants.*] Go, blustering slave—He has not heard of Murza,
That dexterous message frees me from suspicion.

SCENE VIII.

Enter HASAN *and* CARAZA, *with Mutes, who throw the black robe upon* IRENE, *and sign to her Attendants to withdraw.*

Has. Forgive, fair Excellence, the unwilling tongue,
The tongue, that, forced by strong necessity,
Bids beauty, such as thine, prepare to die.
Irene. What wild mistake is this! Take hence with speed
Your robe of mourning, and your dogs of death.
Quick from my sight, you inauspicious monsters,
Nor dare henceforth to shock Irene's walks.

Has. Alas! they come commanded by the Sultan,
The unpitying ministers of Turkish justice,
Nor dare to spare the life his frown condemns.
Irene. Are these the rapid thunderbolts of war,
That pour with sudden violence on kingdoms,
And spread their flames resistless o'er the world?
What sleepy charms benumb these active heroes,
Depress their spirits, and retard their speed?
Beyond the fear of lingering punishment,
Aspasia now, within her lover's arms,
Securely sleeps, and in delightful dreams
Smiles at the threat'nings of defeated rage.
Car. We come, bright Virgin, though relenting Nature
Shrinks at the hated task, for thy destruction;
When summon'd by the Sultan's clamorous fury,
We ask'd with timorous tongue the offender's name,
He struck his tortured breast, and roar'd, Irene!
We started at the sound, again inquired;
Again his thundering voice return'd, Irene!
Irene. Whence is this rage? what barbarous tongue has wrong'd me? [cense?
What fraud misleads him? or what crimes in-
Has. Expiring Cali named Irene's chamber,
The place appointed for his master's death.
Irene. Irene's chamber! from my faithful bosom
Far be the thought—But hear my protestation.
Car. 'Tis ours, alas! to punish, not to judge,
Not call'd to try the cause, we heard the sentence,
Ordain'd the mournful messengers of death.
Irene. Some ill-designing statesman's base intrigue!
Some cruel stratagem of jealous beauty!
Perhaps yourselves the villains that defame me,
Now haste to murder, ere returning thought
Recall the extorted doom.———It must be so:
Confess your crime, or lead me to the Sultan,
There dauntless truth shall blast the vile accuser;
Then shall you feel what language cannot utter,
Each piercing torture, every change of pain,
That vengeance can invent, or power inflict.
[*Enter* Abdalla: *he stops short and listens.*

SCENE IX.

Irene, Hasan, Caraza, *and* Abdalla.

Abd. [*Aside.*] All is not lost, Abdalla; see the queen,
See the last witness of thy guilt and fear
Enrobed in death—despatch her, and be great.
Car. Unhappy fair! compassion calls upon me
To check this torrent of imperious rage;
While unavailing anger crowds thy tongue
With idle threats and fruitless exclamation,
The fraudful moments ply their silent wings,
And steal thy life away. Death's horrid angel
Already shakes his bloody sabre o'er thee.
The raging Sultan burns till our return,
Curses the dull delays of lingering mercy,
And thinks his fatal mandates ill obey'd.
Abd. Is then your sovereign's life so cheaply rated,
That thus you parly with detected treason?
Should she prevail to gain the Sultan's presence,
Soon might her tears engage a lover's credit;
Perhaps her malice might transfer the charge;
Perhaps her poisonous tongue might blast Abdalla.
Irene. O let me but be heard, nor fear from me
Or flights of power or projects of ambition.
My hopes, my wishes, terminate in life,
A little life, for grief, and for repentance.
Abd. I mark'd her wily messenger afar,
And saw him skulking in the closest walks;
I guess'd her dark designs, and warn'd the Sultan,
And bring her former sentence new confirm'd.
Has. Then call it not our cruelty, nor crime;
Deem us not deaf to wo, nor blind to beauty,
That thus constrain'd we speed the stroke of death. [*Beckons the Mutes.*
Irene. O, name not death! Distraction and amazement,
Horror and agony are in that sound!
Let me but live, heap woes on woes upon me,
Hide me with murderers in the dungeon's gloom,
Send me to wander on some pathless shore,
Let shame and hooting infamy pursue me,
Let slavery harass, and let hunger gripe.
Car. Could we reserve the sentence of the Sultan,
Our bleeding bosoms plead Irene's cause.
But cries and tears are vain; prepare with patience
To meet that fate we can delay no longer.
[*The Mutes at the sign lay hold of her.*
Abd. Despatch, ye lingering slaves; or nimbler hands,
Quick at my call shall execute your charge;
Despatch, and learn a fitter time for pity.
Irene. Grant me one hour, O grant me but a moment,
And bounteous Heaven repay the mighty mercy
With peaceful death, and happiness eternal.
Car. The prayer I cannot grant—I dare not hear.
Short be thy pains, [*Signs again to the Mutes.*
Irene. Unutterable anguish!
Guilt and despair, pale spectres, grin around me,
And stun me with the yellings of damnation!
O, hear my prayers! accept all-pitying Heaven,
These tears, these pangs, these last remains of life;
Nor let the crimes of this detested day
Be charged upon my soul. O, mercy! mercy!
[*Mutes force her out.*

SCENE X.

Abdalla, Hasan, *and* Caraza.

Abd. [*Aside.*] Safe in her death, and in Demetrius' flight,
Abdalla, bid thy troubled breast be calm.
Now shalt thou shine the darling of the Sultan,
The plot all Cali's, the detection thine.
Has. [*To* Car.] Does not thy bosom (for I know thee tender,
A stranger to th' oppressor's savage joy,)
Melt at Irene's fate, and share her woes?
Car. Her piercing cries yet fill the loaded air,
Dwell on my ear, and sadden all my soul.
But let us try to clear our clouded brows,
And tell the horrid tale with cheerful face;
The stormy Sultan rages at our stay.
Abd. Frame your report with circumspective art:
Inflame her crimes, exalt your own obedience;
But let no thoughtless hint involve Abdalla.
Car. What need of caution to report the fate
Of her the Sultan's voice condemn'd to die?
Or why should he, whose violence of duty

Has served his prince so well, demand our silence?
Abd. Perhaps my zeal, too fierce, betray'd my prudence;
Perhaps my warmth exceeded my commission;
Perhaps—I will not stoop to plead my cause,
Or argue with the slave that saved Demetrius.
Car. From his escape learn thou the power of virtue; [worth.
Nor hope his fortune, while thou want'st his
Has. The Sultan comes, still gloomy, still enraged.

SCENE XI.

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, *and* ABDALLA.

Mah. Where's this fair traitoress? Where's this smiling mischief,
Whom neither vows could fix, nor favours bind?
Has. Thine orders, mighty Sultan! are perform'd,
And all Irene now is breathless clay.
Mah. Your hasty zeal defrauds the claim of justice,
And disappointed vengeance burns in vain.
I came to heighten tortures by reproach,
And add new terrors to the face of death.
Was this the maid whose love I bought with empire?
True, she was fair; the smile of innocence
Play'd on her cheek—So shone the first apostate—
Irene's chamber! Did not roaring Cali,
Just as the rack forced out his struggling soul,
Name for the scene of death, Irene's chamber?
Mus. His breath prolong'd but to detect her treason,
Then in short sighs forsook his broken frame.
Mah. Decreed to perish in Irene's chamber!
There had she lull'd me with endearing falsehoods,
Clasp'd in her arms, or slumbering on her breast,
And bared my bosom to the ruffian's dagger.

SCENE XII.

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, MURZA, *and* ABDALLA.

Mur. Forgive, great Sultan! that, by fate prevented,
I bring a tardy message from Irene.
Mah. Some artful wile of counterfeited love!
Some soft decoy to lure me to destruction!
And thou, the curst accomplice of her treason,
Declare thy message, and expect thy doom.
Mur. The queen requested that a chosen troop
Might intercept the traitor Greek, Demetrius,
Then lingering with his captive mistress here.
Mus. The Greek Demetrius! whom th' expiring Bassa
Declared the chief associate of his guilt!
Mah. A chosen troop—to intercept—Demetrius— [sage;
The queen requested—Wretch, repeat the mes-
And, if one varied accent prove thy falsehood,
Or but one moment's pause betray confusion,
Those trembling limbs—Speak out thou shivering traitor.
Mur. The queen requested——
Mah. Who? the dead Irene?
Was she then guiltless? has my thoughtless rage
Destroyed the fairest workmanship of Heaven!
Doom'd her to death unpity'd and unheard,
Amidst her kind solicitudes for me!
Ye slaves of cruelty, ye tools of rage,
[*To* HAS. *and* CAR.
Ye blind officious ministers of folly,
Could not her charms repress your zeal for murder?
Could not her prayers, her innocence, her tears,
Suspend the dreadful sentence for an hour?
One hour had freed me from the fatal error;
One hour had saved me from despair and madness.
Car. Your fierce impatience forced us from your presence,
Urged us to speed, and bade us banish pity,
Nor trust our passions with her fatal charms.
Mah. What hadst thou lost by slighting those commands?
Thy life, perhaps—Were but Irene spared,
Well if a thousand lives like thine had perish'd;
Such beauty, sweetness, love, were cheaply bought [globe.
With half the grovelling slaves that load the
Mus. Great is thy wo! But think, illustrious Sultan,
Such ills are sent for souls like thine to conquer.
Shake off this weight of unavailing grief,
Rush to the war, display thy dreadful banners,
And lead thy troops victorious round the world.
Mah. Robb'd of the maid with whom I wish'd to triumph,
No more I burn for fame, or for dominion;
Success and conquest now are empty sounds,
Remorse and anguish seize on all my breast;
Those groves, whose shades embowered the dear Irene, [ties,
Heard her last cries, and fann'd her dying beau-
Shall hide me from the tasteless world forever.
[MAHOMET *goes back, and returns.*
Yet, ere I quit the sceptre of dominion,
Let one just act conclude the hateful day.
Hew down, ye guards, those vassals of destruction, [*Pointing to* HAS. *and* CAR.
Those hounds of blood, that catch the hint to kill,
Bear off with eager haste th' unfinish'd sentence,
And speed the stroke lest mercy should o'ertake them.
Car. Then hear, great Mahomet, the voice of truth. [Irene?
Mah. Hear! shall I hear thee? didst thou hear
Car. Hear but a moment.
Mah. Hadst thou heard a moment,
Thou might'st have lived, for thou hadst spared Irene. [save her.
Car. I heard her, pitied her, and wish'd to
Mah. And wish'd—Be still thy fate to wish in vain.
Car. I heard, and soften'd, till Abdalla brought
Her final doom, and hurried her destruction.
Mah. Abdalla brought her doom! Abdalla brought it!
The wretch whose guilt, declared by tortured Cali, [brance.
My rage and grief had hid from my remem-
Abdalla brought her doom!
Has. Abdalla brought it,
While yet she begg'd to plead her cause before thee. [me!
Mah. O seize me Madness—Did she call on

I feel, I see the ruffian's barbarous rage.
He seized her melting in the fond appeal,
And stopp'd the heavenly voice that call'd on me.
My spirits fail; awhile support me Vengeance—
Be just, ye slaves; and, to be just, be cruel;
Contrive new racks, embitter every pang,
Inflict whatever treason can deserve,
Which murder'd innocence that call'd on me.
[*Exit* MAHOMET; ABDALLA *is dragged off.*

SCENE XIII.

HASAN, CARAZA, MUSTAPHA, *and* MURZA.

Mus. [*To* MURZA.] What plagues, what tortures are in store for thee,
Thou sluggish idler, dilatory slave!
Behold the model of consummate beauty,
Torn from the mourning earth by thy neglect.
Mur. Such was the will of Heaven—A band of Greeks,
That mark'd my course, suspicious of my purpose,
Rush'd out and seized me, thoughtless and unarm'd,
Breathless, amazed, and on the guarded beach
Detain'd me, till Demetrius set me free.
Mus. So sure the fall of greatness, raised on crimes;
So fix'd the justice of all-conscious Heaven!
When haughty guilt exults with impious joy,
Mistake shall blast, or accident destroy;
Weak man with impious rage may throw the dart,
But heaven shall guide it to the guilty heart.

EPILOGUE,

BY SIR WILLIAM YONGE.

MARRY a Turk! a haughty tyrant king!
Who thinks us women born to dress and sing
To please his fancy! see no other man!
Let him persuade me to it—if he can;
Besides, he has fifty wives, and who can bear
To have the fiftieth part her paltry share?

'Tis true, the fellow's handsome, straight, and tall,
But how the devil should he please us all!
My swain is little—true—but be it known,
My pride's to have that little all my own.
Men will be ever to their errors blind,
Where woman's not allow'd to speak her mind.
I swear this Eastern pageantry is nonsense,
And for one man—one wife's enough in conscience.

In vain proud man usurps what's woman's due;
For us alone they honour's paths pursue:
Inspired by us, they glory's heights ascend;
Woman the source, the object, and the end.
Though wealth, and power, and glory, they receive,
These are all trifles to what we can give.
For us the statesman labours, hero fights,
Bears toilsome days, and wakes long tedious nights;
And, when blest peace has silenced war's alarms,
Receives his full reward in Beauty's arms.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

LONDON: A POEM:

IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

WRITTEN IN 1738.

—Quis ineptæ
Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus ut teneat se? JUV.

THOUGH grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injured Thales* bids the town farewell,

JUV. SAT. III.

Quamvis digressu veteris confusus amici;
Laudo tamen vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
Destinet, atque unum civem donare Sibyllæ.

Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend,
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend,
Resolved at length, from vice and London far,
To breathe in distant fields a purer air,

* Sir John Hawkins says, that by Thales we are here to understand Savage. Mr. Boswell asserts that this is entirely groundless, and adds, "I have been assured that Dr. Johnson said, he was not so much as acquainted with Savage when he wrote his 'London.'" This added to the circumstance of the date (for Savage did not set out for Wales till 1739) might be decisive, if, unfortunately for Mr. Boswell, he had not, a few pages after, given us some highly complimentary lines which "he was assured were written by Dr. Johnson," "Ad Ricardum Savage," in April, 1738, about a month before "London" was published. This surely implies previous acquaintance with Savage, for Dr. Johnson would not have praised a stranger in such terms, and gives a very strong probability to Sir John Hawkins' conjecture. That Savage did not set out for Wales until the following year, is a matter of little consequence, as the *intention* of such a journey would justify the lines alluding to it. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 100, and p. 139, 8vo. edit. 1804.—C

And fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more.
[b]For who would leave, unbribed, Hibernia's land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away,
But all, whom hunger spares, with age decay:
Here malice, rapine, accident conspire,
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;
Their ambush here relentless ruffians lay,
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;
Here falling houses thunder on your head,
And here a female Athcist talks you dead.
[c]While Thales waits the wherry that contains
Of dissipated wealth the small remains,
On Thames's banks, in silent thought we stood
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood;
Struck with the seat that gave Eliza* birth,
We kneel and kiss the consecrated earth;
In pleasing dreams the blissful age renew,
And call Britannia's glories back to view;
Behold her cross triumphant on the main,
The guard of commerce, and the dread of Spain,
Ere masquerades debauch'd, excise oppress'd,
Or English honour grew a standing jest.
A transient calm the happy scenes bestow,
And for a moment lull the sense of wo.
At length awaking, with contemptuous frown,
Indignant Thales eyes the neighbouring town.
[d]Since worth, he cries, in these degenerate days
Wants even the cheap reward of empty praise;
In those cursed walls, devote to vice and gain,
Since unrewarded Science toils in vain;
Since hope but soothes to double my distress,
And every moment leaves my little less;
While yet my steady steps no [e]staff sustains,
And life still vigorous revels in my veins;
Grant me, kind Heaven, to find some happier place,
Where honesty and sense are no disgrace;
Some pleasing bank where verdant osiers play,
Some peaceful vale with Nature's paintings gay;
Where once the harass'd Briton found repose,
And, safe in poverty, defy'd his foes;
Some secret cell, ye Powers, indulgent give,
Let —— live here, for —— he has learn'd to live.
Here let those reign, whom pensions can incite
To vote a patriot black, a courtier white;

[a] —Ego vel Prochytam præpono Suburræ.
Nam quid tam miserum, et tam solum vidimus, ut non
Deterius credas horrere incendia, lapsus
Tectorum assiduos, ac mille pericula sævæ
Urbis, et Augusto recitantes mense poetas?
[c] Sed dum tota domus rhedâ componitur una,
Substitit ad veteres arcus.———
[d] Hinc tunc Umbritius: Quando artibus, inquit, honestis
Nullus in urbe locus, nulla emolumenta laborum,
Res hodie minor est, heri quam fuit, atque eadem cras
Deteret exiguis aliquid: proponimus illuc
Ire, fatigatas ubi Dædalus exuit alas:
Dum nova canities.——
[e] —— et pedibus me
Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.
[f] Cedamus patriâ: vivant Arturius istic
Et Catulus: maneant qui nigra in candida vertunt.

* Queen Elizabeth, born at Greenwich.

Explain their country's dear-bought rights away,
And plead for* pirates in the face of day;
With slavish tenets taint our poison'd youth,
And lend a lie the confidence of truth.
[g]Let such raise palaces, and manors buy,
Collect a tax, or farm a lottery;
With warbling eunuchs† fill a licensed stage,
And lull to servitude a thoughtless age.
Heroes, proceed! what bounds your pride shall hold? [gold?
What check restrain your thirst for power and
Behold rebellious Virtue quite o'erthrown,
Behold our fame, our wealth, our lives your own.
To such the plunder of a land is given,
When public crimes inflame the wrath of Heaven: [me,
[h]But what, my friend, what hope remains for
Who start at theft, and blush at perjury?
Who scarce forbear, though Britain's court he sing,
To pluck a titled poet's borrow'd wing;
A statesman's logic unconvinced can hear,
And dare to slumber o'er the ‡Gazetteer;
Despise a fool in half his pension dress'd,
And strive in vain to laugh at Clodio's jest.
[i]Others with softer smiles and subtler art,
Can sap the principles, or taint the heart;
With more address a lover's note convey,
Or bribe a virgin's innocence away.
Well may they rise, while I, whose rustic tongue
Ne'er knew to puzzle right, or varnish wrong,
Spurn'd as a beggar, dreaded as a spy,
Live unregarded, unlamented die.
[j]For what but social guilt the friend endears?
Who shares Orgilio's crimes, his fortune shares;
[k]But thou, should tempting Villany present
All Marlborough hoarded, or all Villiers spent,
Turn from the glittering bribe thy scornful eye,
Nor sell for gold, what gold could never buy,
The peaceful slumber, self-approving day,
Unsullied fame, and conscience ever gay.
[l]The cheated nation's happy favourites see!
Mark whom the great caress, who frown on me!
London! the needy villain's general home,
The common-sewer of Paris and of Rome!
With eager thirst, by folly or by fate,
Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.

[g] Queis facile est ædem conducere, flumina, portus,
Siccandam eluviem, portandum ad busta cadaver ——
Munera nunc edunt.
[h] Quid Romæ faciam? mentiri nescio: librum,
Si malus est, nequeo laudare et poscere.——
[i] ——Ferre ad nuptam quæ mittit adulter,
Quæ mandat, norint alii; me nemo ministro
Fur erit, atque ideo nulli comes exeo.
[j] Quis nunc diligitur, nisi conscius?———
Carus erit Verri, qui Verrem tempore, quo vult,
Accusare potest.———
[k] ————Tanti tibi non sit opaci
Omnis arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum,
Ut somno careas.
[l] Quæ nunc divitibus gens acceptissima nostris,
Et quos præcipue fugiam, properabo fateri.

* The invasions of the Spaniards were defended in the Houses of Parliament.
† The Licensing Act was then lately made.
‡ The paper which at that time contained apologies for the Court.

Forgive my transports on a theme like this,
[m]I cannot bear a French metropolis.
[n]Illustrious Edward! from the realms of day,
The land of heroes and of saints survey;
Nor hope the British lineaments to trace
The rustic grandeur, or the surly grace;
But, lost in thoughtless ease and empty show,
Behold the warrior dwindled to a beau;
Sense, freedom, piety, refined away,
Of France the mimic, and of Spain the prey.
All that at home no more can beg or steal,
Or like a gibbet better than a wheel;
Hiss'd from the stage, or hooted from the court,
Their air, their dress, their politics, import;
[o]Obsequious, artful, voluble and gay,
On Britain's fond credulity they prey.
No gainful trade their industry can 'scape,
[p]They sing, they dance, clean shoes or cure a clap:
All sciences a fasting Monsieur knows,
And, bid him go to hell, to hell he goes.
[q]Ah! what avails it, that from slavery far,
I drew the breath of life in English air;
Was early taught a Briton's right to prize,
And lisp the tale of Henry's victories;
If the gull'd conqueror receives the chain,
And flattery prevails when arms are vain?
[r]Studious to please, and ready to submit,
The supple Gaul was born a parasite:
Still to his interest true where'er he goes,
Wit, bravery, worth, his lavish tongue bestows;
In every face a thousand graces shine,
From every tongue flows harmony divine.
[s]These arts in vain our rugged natives try,
Strain out with falt'ring diffidence, a lie,
And get a kick for awkward flattery.
Besides, with justice, this discerning age
Admires their wondrous talents for the stage:
[t]Well may they venture on the mimic's art,
Who play from morn to night a borrow'd part;
Practised their master's notions to embrace,
Repeat his maxims, and reflect his face;
With every wild absurdity comply,
And view each object with another's eye;
To shake with laughter ere the jest they hear,
To pour at will the counterfeited tear;
And, as their patron hints the cold or heat,
To shake in dog-days, in December sweat.
[u]How, when competitors like these contend,

[m] ————Non possum ferre, Quirites,
Græcam urbem.————

[n] Rusticus ille tuus sumit trechedipna, Quirine,
Et ceromatico fert niceteria collo.

[o] Ingenium velox, audacia perdita, sermo
Promptus.————

[p] Augur, schœnobates, medicus, magus: omnia novit.
Græculus esuriens, in cœlum, jusseris, ibit.

[q] Usque adeo nihil est, quod nostra infantia Hausit Aventini? [cœlum

[r] Quid? quod adulandi gens prudentissima, laudat
Sermonem indocti, faciem deformis amici?

[s] Hæc eadem licet et nobis laudare: sed illis Creditur.————

[t] Natio comœda est. Rides? majore cachinno Concutitur, &c.

[u] Non sumus ergo pares: melior qui semper et omni
Nocte dieque potest alienum sumere vultum,
A facie jactare manus: laudare paratus,
Si bene ructavit, si rectum minxit amicus.——

Can surly virtue hope to fix a friend?
Slaves that with serious impudence beguile,
And lie without a blush, without a smile;
Exalt each trifle, every vice adore,
Your taste in snuff, your judgment in a whore;
Can Balbo's eloquence applaud, and swear
He gropes his breeches with a Monarch's air.
For arts like these preferr'd, admired, caress'd,
They first invade your table, then your breast;
[v]Explore your secrets with insidious art,
Watch the weak hour, and ransack all the heart;
Then soon your ill-placed confidence repay,
Commence your lords, and govern or betray.
[w]By numbers here from shame or censure free
All crimes are safe, but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues,
This, only this, provokes the snarling Muse.
The sober trader at a tatter'd cloak
Wakes from his dream, and labours for a joke;
With brisker air the silken courtiers gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways.
[x]Of all the griefs that harass the distress'd,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest; [heart,
Fate never wounds more deep the generous
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.
[y]Has Heaven reserved, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste or undiscover'd shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desart yet unclaim'd* by Spain?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear Oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is every where confess'd,
[z]Slow rises worth by poverty depress'd:
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold, [sold:
Where looks are merchandize and smiles are
Where, won by bribes, by flatteries implored,
The groom retails the favours of his lord. [cries
But hark! the affrighted crowd's tumultuous
Roll through the streets, and thunder to the skies:
Raised from some pleasing dream of wealth and power,
Some pompous palace, or some blissful bower,
Aghast you start, and scarce with aching sight
Sustain the approaching fire's tremendous light;
Swift from pursuing horrors take your way,
And leave your little all to flames a prey;
[a]Then through the world a wretched vagrant roam,

[v] Scire volunt secreta domus atque inde timeri.

[w] ————Materiam præbet causasque jocorum
Omnibus hic idem? si fœda et scissa lacerna, &c.

[x] Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.

[y] ————Agmine facto,
Debuerant olim tenues migrasse Quirites.

[z] Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi; sed Romæ durior illis
Conatus.————
————Omnia Romæ
Cum pretio.————
Cogimur, et cultis augere peculia servis.

[a] ———— Ultimus autem
Ærumnæ cumulus, quod nudum et frustra rogantem
Nemo cibo, nemo hospitio, tectoque juvabit.

* The Spaniards at this time were said to make claim to some of our American provinces

For where can starving merit find a home?
In vain your mournful narrative disclose,
While all neglect, and most insult your woes.
[b]Should Heaven's just bolts Orgilio's wealth confound,
And spread his flaming palace on the ground,
Swift o'er the land the dismal rumour flies,
And public mournings pacify the skies;
The laureat tribe in venal verse relate,
How virtue wars with persecuting fate;
[c]With well-feign'd gratitude the pension'd band
Refund the plunder of the beggar'd land.
See! while he builds, the gaudy vassals come,
And crowd with sudden wealth the rising dome;
The price of boroughs and of souls restore;
And raise his treasures higher than before:
Now bless'd with all the baubles of the great,
The polish'd marble, and the shining plate,
[d]Orgilio sees the golden pile aspire,
And hopes from angry Heaven another fire.
[e]Couldst thou resign the park and play content,
For the fair banks of Severn or of Trent; there might'st thou find some elegant retreat,
Some hireling senator's deserted seat;
And stretch thy prospects o'er the smiling land,
For less than rents the dungeons of the Strand:
There prune thy walks, support the drooping flowers,
Direct thy rivulets, and twine thy bowers;
And while thy grounds a cheap repast afford,
Despise the dainties of a venal lord;
There every bush with Nature's music rings;
There every breeze bears health upon its wings;
On all thy hours security shall smile,
And bless thine evening walk and morning toil.
[f]Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,
And sign your will before you sup from home.
[g]Some fiery fop with new commission vain,
Who sleeps on brambles till he kills his man;
Some frolic drunkard, reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest.
[h]Yet even these heroes, mischievously gay,
Lords of the street, and terrors of the way;

[b] Si magna Asturici cecidit domus, horrida mater,
Pullati proceres.———
[c] ——Jam accurrit, qui marmora donet,
Conferat impensas: hic, &c.
Hic modium argenti.———
[d] ———Meliora ac plura reponit
Persicus orborum lautissimus.——
[e] Si potes avelli Circensibus, optima Soræ,
Aut Fabrateriæ domus, aut Frusinone paratur,
Quanti nunc tenebras unum conducis in annum.
Hortulus hic.——
Vive bidentis amans, et culti villicus horti.
Unde epulum possis centum dare Pythagoræis.
[f] ———Possis ignavus haberi,
Et subiti casus improvidus, ad cœnam si
Intestatus eas.——
[g] Ebrius, ac petulans, qui nullum forte cecidit,
Dat pœnas, noctem patitur lugentis amicum
Peleidæ.——
[h] ——Sed, quamvis improbus annis,

Flush'd as they are, with folly, youth, and wine,
Their prudent insults to the poor confine:
Afar they mark the flambeau's bright approach,
And shun the shining train, and golden coach.
[i]In vain, these dangers past, your doors you close,
And hope the balmy blessings of repose;
Cruel with guilt, and daring with despair,
The midnight murderer bursts the faithless bar;
Invades the sacred hour of silent rest,
And leaves, unseen, a dagger in your breast.
[j]Scarce can our fields, such crowds at Tyburn die,
With hemp the gallows and the fleet supply.
Propose your schemes, ye senatorian band,
Whose ways and means* support the sinking land:
Lest ropes be wanting in the tempting spring,
To rig another convoy for the king.†
[k]A single jail, in Alfred's golden reign,
Could half the nation's criminals contain:
Fair justice, then, without constraint adored,
Held high the steady scale, but sheath'd the sword;
No spies were paid, no special juries known;
Blest age! but ah! how different from our own!
[l]Much could I add, but see the boat at hand,
The tide, retiring, calls me from the land:
[m]Farewell!—When youth, and health, and fortune spent,
Thou fly'st for refuge to the Wilds of Kent;
And, tired, like me, with follies and with crimes,
In angry numbers warn'st succeeding times;
Then shall thy friend, nor thou refuse his aid,
Still foe to vice, forsake his Cambrian shade;
In virtue's cause once more exert his rage,
Thy satire point, and animate thy page.

Atque mero fervens, cavet hunc, quem coccina læna
Vitari jubet, et comitum longissimus ordo,
Multum præterea flammarum, atque ænea lampas.
[i] Nec tamen hoc tantum metuas: nam qui spoliet te
Non deerit; clausis domibus, &c.
[j] Maximus in vinclis ferri modus, ut timeas,
Vomer deficiat, ne marræ et sarcula desint. [ne
[k] Felices proavorum atavos, felicia dicas
Sæcula, quæ quondam sub regibus atque tribunis
Viderunt uno contentam carcere Romam.
[l] His alias poteram et plures subnectere causas:
Sed jumenta vocant—— [sas:
[m] ——Ergo vale nostri memor: et quoties te
Roma tuo refici properantem reddet Aquino,
Me quoque ad Elvinam Cererem, vestramque Dianam
Convelle a Cumis: satiraram ego, ni pudet illas,
Adjutor gelidos veniam caligatus in agros.

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* A cant term in the House of Commons, for methods of raising money.

† The nation was discontented at the visits made by the king to Hanover.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES;

IN IMITATION OF THE

TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

Let *Observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
Then say, how hope and fear, desire and hate,
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
Where wavering man, betray'd by vent'rous pride,
To tread the dreary paths without a guide,
As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good;
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
When Vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with every wish th' afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
With fatal sweetness elocution flows;
Impeachment stops the speaker's powerful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.

†But, scarce observed, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the general massacre of Gold;
Wide wasting pest! that rages unconfined,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind:
For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.
Let History tell where rival kings command,
And dubious title shakes the madded land,
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord;
Low sculks the hind beneath the rage of power,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower,
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Though Confiscation's vultures hover round.

The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy;
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy;
Now fears in dire vicissitude invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade;
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.

Yet‡ still one general cry the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival and the gaping heir.

Once§ more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest:
Thou who could'st laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece;
Where wealth, unloved, without a mourner died;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of favourites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judged a cause;
How wouldst thou shake at Briton's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe?
Attentive truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,
To thee were solemn toys, or empty show,
The robes of pleasure and the veils of wo:
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, and whose griefs are vain.

Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at every glance on human kind;
How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,
Search every state, and canvass every prayer.

*Unnumber'd suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;
Delusive Fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
On every stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning worshipper no more;
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies,
From every room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright palladium of the place;
And, smoked in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yields the frame of gold;
For now no more we trace in every line
Heroic worth, benevolence divine:
The form distorted, justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall.

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foes' doom, or guard her favourites' zeal? [rings,
Through Freedom's sons no more remonstrance
Degrading nobles, and controlling kings;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes:
With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:
To him the church, the realm, their powers consign,
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine,
Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,
His smile alone security bestows:
Still to new heights his restless wishes tower,
Claim leads to claim, and power advances power;

* Ver. 1—11. Ver. 23—27
† Ver. 12—22.
‡ Ver. 28—55
* Ver. 56—107.

Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his sovereign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
Now drops at once the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glittering plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liveried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.
Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine, thine?
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end, be
Or livest thou now, with safer pride content,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
For, why did Wolsey, near the steeps of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulfs below?
*What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life?
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exiled Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings allied?
What but their wish indulged in courts to shine,
And power too great to keep, or to resign?
†When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
Resistless burns the fever of renown,
Caught from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And ‡Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!
Yet, should thy soul indulge the generous heat
Till captive Science yields her last retreat;
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day;
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;
Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade,
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man reversed for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from Letters, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the gaol.
See nations, slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.§
Nor deem, when Learning her last prize bestows,
The glitt'ring eminence exempt from woes;

See, when the vulgar 'scape, despised or awed,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds though smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd tent;
Mark'd out by dangerous parts, he meets the shock,
And fatal Learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.
*The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the Gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such in distant lands the Britons shine;
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine,
This power has praise that virtue scarce can warm,
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet Reason frowns on War's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name;
And mortgaged states their grandsires' wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;
Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey,
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.
†On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their power combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain; [remain,
"Think nothing gain'd," he cries, "till nought
On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realm of Frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay:
Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day:
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left a name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.
‡All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility and barbarous pride,
With half mankind embattled at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way;
Attendant Flattery counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more,

* Ver. 108—113. † Ver. 114—132.
‡ There is a tradition, that the study of friar Bacon, built on an arch over the bridge, will fall when a man greater than Bacon shall pass under it. To prevent so shocking an accident, it was pulled down many years since.
§ See Gent. Mag. Vol. LXVIII. p. 951. 1027.

* Ver. 133—146. † Ver. 147—167 ‡ Ver 168—187.

Fresh praise is try'd till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind,
New powers are claim'd, new powers are still bestow'd,
Till rude Resistance lops the spreading god;
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;
Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
The incumbered oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast,
Through purple billows and a floating host.
The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarian power,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway;
Short sway! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;
From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;
The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,
With all the sons of ravage crowd the war;
The baffled prince, in honour's flattering bloom
Of hasty greatness, finds the fatal doom;
His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.

* Enlarge my life with multitude of days!
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays;
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted is protracted wo.
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy:
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flower;
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more:
Now pall the tasteless meats and joyless wines,
And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain:
No sounds, alas! would touch th' impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near;
Nor lute nor lyre his feeble powers attend,
Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend;
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
The still returning tale, and lingering jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest,
While growing hopes scarce awe the gathering sneer,
And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;
The watchful guests still hint the last offence;
The daughter's petulance, the son's expense,
Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.
Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade;
But unextinguish'd Avarice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.
But grant, the virtues of a temperate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
An age that melts in unperceived decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;
Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers;
The general favourite as the general friend;
Such age there is, and who shall wish its end?
Yet even on this her load Misfortune flings,
To press the weary minutes' flagging wings;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred Merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear;
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drop some joy from withering life away;
New forms arise, and different views engage,
Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage,
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.
But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulfs of Fate,
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend.
By Solon caution'd to regard his end,
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise!
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow
And Swift expires a driveller and a show.

* The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face;
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley cursed the form that pleased a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,
Whom Pleasure keeps too busy to be wise;
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolic, and the dance by night,
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latent fashion of the heart;
What care, what rules, your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tired with contempt, she quits the slippery reign,
And Pride and Prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.
The guardians yield, by force superior plied,
To Interest, Prudence; and to Flattery, Pride.
Here Beauty falls betray'd, despised, distress'd,
And hissing Infamy proclaims the rest.

† Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike, alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain
Which Heaven may hear, nor deem Religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice.
Safe in his tower, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious prayer;

* Ver. 183—293.

* Ver. 289—345. † Ver. 346—365.

Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
Yet, when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat.
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
These goods he grants, who grants the power to gain;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK,

AT THE

Opening of the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane, 1747.

When Learning's triumph o'er her barbarous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakspeare rose;
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain.
His powerful strokes presiding Truth impress'd,
And unresisted Passion storm'd the breast.

Then Jonson came, instructed from the school,
To please in method, and invent by rule;
His studious patience and laborious art,
By regular approach assail'd the heart:
Cold approbation gave the lingering bays,
For those, who durst not censure, scarce could praise.
A mortal born, he met the general doom,
But left, like Egypt's kings, a lasting tomb.

The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
Nor wish'd for Jonson's art, or Shakspeare's flame,
Themselves they studied—as they felt they writ;
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.
Vice always found a sympathetic friend;
They pleased their age, and did not aim to mend.
Yet bards like these aspired to lasting praise,
And proudly hoped to pimp in future days.
Their cause was general, their supports were strong,
Their slaves were willing, and their reign was long:
Till Shame regain'd the post that Sense betray'd,
And Virtue call'd Oblivion to her aid.

Then, crush'd by rules, and weaken'd as refined,
For years the power of Tragedy declined;
From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
Till Declamation roar'd, while Passion slept;
Yet still did Virtue deign the stage to tread,
Philosophy remain'd though Nature fled.
But forced, at length, her ancient reign to quit,
She saw great Faustus lay the ghost of Wit;
Exulting Folly hail'd the joyful day,
And Pantomime and Song confirm'd her sway.

But who the coming changes can presage,
And mark the future periods of the Stage?
Perhaps, if skill could distant times explore,
New Behns, new Durfeys, yet remain in store;
Perhaps, where Lear has raved, and Hamlet died,
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride:
Perhaps (for who can guess th' effects of chance?)
Here Hunt may box, or Mahomet * may dance.

Hard is his lot that, here by Fortune placed,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;
With every meteor of caprice must play,
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day.
Ah! let not Censure term our fate our choice,
The stage but echoes back the public voice;
The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to please, must please, to live.

Then prompt no more the follies you decry,
As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;
'Tis yours, this night, to bid the reign commence
Of rescued Nature and reviving Sense;
To chase the charms of Sound, the pomp or Show,
For useful Mirth, and salutary Woe;
Bid scenic Virtue form the rising age,
And Truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK, APRIL 5, 1750.

BEFORE THE MASQUE OF COMUS,

ACTED AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE FOR THE BENEFIT OF MILTON'S GRANDDAUGHTER.

Ye patriot crowds, who burn for England's name,
Ye nymphs, whose bosoms beat at Milton's fame,
Whose generous zeal, unbought by flattering rhymes,
Shames the mean pensions of Augustan times,
Immortal patrons of succeeding days,
Attend this prelude of perpetual praise;
Let wit, condemn'd the feeble war to wage
With close malevolence, or public rage,
Let study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,
Behold this theatre, and grieve no more.
This night, distinguish'd by your smile, shall tell
That never Briton can in vain excel;
The slighted arts futurity shall trust,
And rising ages hasten to be just.

At length our mighty bard's victorious lays
Fill the loud voice of universal praise;
And baffled spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,
Yields to renown the centuries to come:
With ardent haste each candidate of fame,
Ambitious, catches at his towering name;
He sees, and pitying sees, vain wealth bestow,
Those pageant honours which he scorn'd below,
While crowds aloft the laureat bust behold,
Or trace his form on circulating gold,
Unknown, unheeded, long his offspring lay,
And want hung threatening o'er her slow decay,
What though she shine with no Miltonian fire,
No favouring Muse her morning dreams inspire;
Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,
Her youth laborious, and her blameless age;
Hers the mild merits of domestic life,
The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.
Thus graced with humble virtue's native charms,
Her grandsire leaves her in Britannia's arms;
Secure with peace, with competence, to dwell,
While tutelary nations guard her cell.
Yours is the charge, ye fair, ye wise, ye brave!
'Tis yours to crown desert—beyond the grave.

* Hunt a famous boxer on the stage; Mahomet a rope-dancer, who had exhibited at Covent-Garden Theatre the winter before, said to be a Turk.

PROLOGUE

TO THE COMEDY OF

THE GOODNATURED MAN, 1769.

Prest by the load of life, the weary mind
Survcys the general toil of human kind,
With cool submission joins the labouring train,
And social sorrow loses half its pain:
Our anxious bard without complaint may share
This bustling season's epidemic care;
Like Cæsar's pilot dignified by Fate,
Tost in onc common storm with all the great;
Distrest alike the statesman and the wit,
When one a Borough courts, and one the Pit.
The busy candidates for power and fame
Have hopes, and fears, and wishes, just the samc;
Disabled both to combat or to fly,
Must hear all taunts, and hear without reply.
Uncheck'd on both loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
Th' offended burgess hoards his angry tale,
For that blest ycar when all that vote may rail;
Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss,
Till that glad night when all that hate may hiss.
"This day the powder'd curls and golden coat,"
Says swelling Crispin, "begg'd a cobbler's vote."
"This night our wit," the pert apprentice cries,
"Lies at my feet; I hiss him, and he dies."
The great, 'tis true, can charm the electing tribe;
The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.
Yet, judged by those whose voices ne'er were sold,
He feels no want of ill-persuading gold;
But, confident of praise, if praise be due,
Trusts without fear to merit and to you.

PROLOGUE

TO THE COMEDY OF

A WORD TO THE WISE.*

Spoken by Mr. Hull.

This night presents a play which public rage,
Or right, or wrong, once hooted from the stage.†
From zeal or malice, now no more we dread,
For English vengeance wars not with the dead.
A generous foe regards with pitying eye
The man whom fate has laid where all must lie.
To wit reviving from its author's dust,
Be kind, ye judges, or at least be just,
For no rencw'd hostilities invade
The oblivious grave's inviolable shade.
Let one great payment every claim appease,
And him, who cannot hurt, allow to please;
To please by scenes unconscious of offence,
By harmless merriment or useful sense.
Where aught of bright, or fair, the piece displays,
Approve it only—'t is too late to praise.
If want of skill, or want of care appear,
Forbear to hiss—the poet cannot hear.
By all, like him, must praise and blame be found,
At best a fleeting gleam, or empty sound.

* Performed at Covent Garden Theatre, May 29, 1777, for the benefit of Mrs. Kelly, widow of Hugh Kelly, Esq. (the author of the play) and her children.

† Upon the first representation of this play, 1770, a party assembled to damn it, and succeeded.

Yet then shall calm reflection bless the night,
When liberal pity dignify'd delight;
When pleasure fired her torch at Virtue's flame,
And Mirth was Bounty with an humbler name.

SPRING.

AN ODE.

Stern Winter now, by Spring repress'd,
Forbears the long-continued strife:
And Nature on her naked breast,
Delights to catch the gales of life.
Now o'er the rural kingdom roves
Soft pleasure with the laughing train,
Love warbles in the vocal groves,
And vegetation plants the plain,
Unhappy! whom to beds of pain,
Arthritic* tyranny consigns;
Whom smiling nature courts in vain,
Though rapture sings and beauty shines.
Yet though my limbs disease invades,
Her wings imagination tries,
And bears me to the peaceful shades,
Where ——'s humble turrets rise.
Here stop, my soul, thy rapid flight,
Nor from the pleasing groves depart,
Where first great nature charm'd my sight,
Where wisdom first inform'd my heart.
Here let me through the vales pursue
A guide—a father—and a friend,
Once more great Nature's works renew,
Once more on Wisdom's voice attend.
From false caresses, causeless strife,
Wild hope, vain fear, alike removed;
Here let me learn the use of life,
When best enjoy'd—when most improved
Teach me, thou venerable bower,
Cool meditation's quiet seat,
The generous scorn of venal power,
The silent grandeur of retreat.
When pride by guilt to greatness climbs,
Or raging factions rush to war,
Here let me learn to shun the crimes
I can't prevent, and will not share.
But lest I fall by subtler foes,
Bright Wisdom, teach me Curio's art,
The swelling passions to compose,
And quell the rebels of the heart.

MIDSUMMER.

AN ODE.

O Phœbus! down the western sky,
Far hence diffuse thy burning ray,
Thy light to distant worlds supply,
And wake them to the cares of day.
Come, gentle Eve, the friend of care,
Come, Cynthia, lovely queen of night!
Refresh me with a cooling air,
And cheer me with a lambent light:
Lay me where o'er the verdant ground
Her living carpet Nature spreads:
Where the green bower, with roses crown'd,
In showers its fragrant foliage sheds,
Improve the peaceful hour with wine,
Let music die along the grove;
Around the bowl let myrtles twine,
And every strain be tuned to love.
Come, Stella, queen of all my heart

* The author being ill of the gout.

Come, born to fill its vast desires!
Thy looks perpetual joys impart,
Thy voice perpetual love inspires.
Whilst all my wish and thine complete,
By turns we languish and we burn,
Let sighing gales our sighs repeat,
Our murmurs—murmuring brooks return.
Let me when nature calls to rest,
And blushing skies the morn foretell,
Sink on the down of Stella's breast,
And bid the waking world farewell.

AUTUMN.

AN ODE.

Alas! with swift and silent pace,
Impatient time rolls on the year;
The seasons change, and nature's face
Now sweetly smiles, now frowns severe.
'T was Spring, 't was Summer, all was gay,
Now Autumn bends a cloudy brow;
The flowers of Spring are swept away,
And Summer-fruits desert the bough.
The verdant leaves that play'd on high,
And wanton'd on the western breeze,
Now trod in dust neglected lie,
As Boreas strips the bending trees.
The fields that waved with golden grain,
As russet heaths, are wild and bare;
Not moist with dew, but drench'd with rain,
Nor health nor pleasure, wanders there.
No more while through the midnight shade,
Beneath the moon's pale orb I stray,
Soft pleasing woes my heart invade,
As Progne pours the melting lay.
From this capricious clime she soars,
Oh! would some god but wings supply!
To where each morn the Spring restores,
Companion of her flight I'd fly.
Vain wish! me fate compels to bear
The downward season's iron reign,
Compels to breathe polluted air,
And shiver on a blasted plain.
What bliss to life can Autumn yield,
If glooms, and showers, and storms prevail,
And Ceres flies the naked field,
And flowers, and fruits, and Phœbus fail?
Oh! what remains, what lingers yet,
To cheer me in the darkening hour!
The grape remains! the friend of wit,
In love, and mirth, of mighty power.
Haste—press the clusters, fill the bowl
Apollo! shoot thy parting ray:
This gives the sunshine of the soul,
This god of health, and verse, and day.
Still—still the jocund strain shall flow,
The pulse with vigorous rapture beat;
My Stella with new charms shall glow,
And every bliss in wine shall meet.

WINTER.

AN ODE.

No more the morn, with tepid rays,
Unfolds the flower of various hue;
Noon spreads no more the genial blaze,
Nor gentle eve distils the dew.
The lingering hours prolong the night,
Usurping Darkness shares the day;
Her mists restrain the force of light,
And Phœbus holds a doubtful sway.
By gloomy twilight half reveal'd,
With sighs we view the hoary hill,
The leafless wood, the naked field,
The snow-topt cot, the frozen rill.
No music warbles through the grove,
No vivid colours paint the plain;
No more with devious steps I rove
Through verdant paths, now sought in vain.
Aloud the driving tempest roars,
Congeal'd, impetuous, showers descend;
Haste, close the window, bar the doors,
Fate leaves me Stella, and a friend.
In nature's aid, let art supply
With light and heat my little sphere;
Rouse, rouse the fire, and pile it high,
Light up a constellation here.
Let music sound the voice of joy,
Or mirth repeat the jocund tale;
Let Love his wanton wiles employ,
And o'er the season wine prevail.
Yet time life's dreary winter brings,
When Mirth's gay tale shall please no more;
Nor music charm—though Stella sings;
Nor love, nor wine, the Spring restore.
Catch, then, Oh! catch the transient hour,
Improve each moment as it flies;
Life's a short summer—man a flower:
He dies—alas! how soon he dies!

THE WINTER'S WALK.

Behold, my fair, where'er we rove,
What dreary prospects round us rise;
The naked hill, the leafless grove,
The hoary ground, the frowning skies!
Nor only through the wasted plain,
Stern Winter! is thy force confess'd;
Still wider spreads thy horrid reign,
I feel thy power usurp my breast.
Enlivening hope, and fond desire,
Resign the heart to spleen and care;
Scarce frighted Love maintains her fire,
And rapture saddens to despair,
In groundless hope, and causeless fear,
Unhappy man! behold thy doom;
Still changing with the changeful year,
The slave of sunshine and of gloom.
Tired with vain joys and false alarms,
With mental and corporeal strife,
Snatch me, my Stella, to thy arms,
And screen me from the ills of life.*

TO MISS *****.

On her giving the Author a gold and silk net-work Purse of her own weaving.†

Though gold and silk their charms unite
To make thy curious web delight,
In vain the varied work would shine,
If wrought by any hand but thine;
Thy hand, that knows the subtler art
To weave those nets that catch the heart.
Spread out by me, the roving coin
Thy nets may catch, but not confine;
Nor can I hope thy silken chain
The glittering vagrants shall restrain.
Why, Stella, was it then decreed
The heart once caught should ne'er be freed?

* And hide me from the sight of life. 1st edition.
† Printed among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

TO MISS *****.

*On her playing upon the Harpsichord in a Room hung with Flower Pieces of her own painting.**

When Stella strikes the tuneful string
In scenes of imitated Spring,
Where Beauty lavishes her powers
On beds of never-fading flowers,
And pleasure propagates around
Each charm of modulated sound;
Ah! think not, in the dangerous hour,
The nymph fictitious as the flower;
But shun, rash youth, the gay alcove,
Nor tempt the snares of wily love.
When charms thus press on every sense,
What thought of flight, or of defence?
Deceitful hope, and vain desire,
For ever flutter o'er her lyre,
Delighting as the youth draws nigh,
To point the glances of her eye,
And forming with unerring art
New chains to hold the captive heart.
But on those regions of delight
Might truth intrude with daring flight,
Could Stella, sprightly, fair, and young,
One moment hear the moral song,
Instruction with her flowers might spring,
And wisdom warble from her string.
Mark, when from thousand mingled dyes
Thou seest one pleasing form arise,
How active light, and thoughtful shade,
In greater scenes each other aid;
Mark, when the different notes agree
In friendly contrariety,
How passion's well-accorded strife
Gives all the harmony of life;
Thy pictures shall thy conduct frame,
Consistent still, though not the same;
Thy music teach the nobler art,
To tune the regulated heart.

EVENING.

AN ODE.

TO STELLA.

Evening now from purple wings
Sheds the grateful gift she brings;
Brilliant drops bedeck the mead,
Cooling breezes shake the reed;
Shake the reed, and curl the stream,
Silver'd o'er with Cynthia's beam:
Near the chequer'd, lonely grove,
Hears, and keeps thy secrets, Love.
Stella, thither let us stray,
Lightly o'er the dewy way.
Phœbus drives his burning car,
Hence, my lovely Stella, far;
In his stead, the Queen of Night
Round us pours a lambent light;
Light that seems but just to show
Breasts that beat, and cheeks that glow.
Let us now, in whisper'd joy,
Evening's silent hours employ,
Silence best, and conscious shades,
Please the hearts that love invades,
Other pleasures give them pain,
Lovers all but love disdain.

* Printed among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

TO THE SAME.

Whether Stella's eyes are found
Fix'd on earth, or glancing round
If her face with pleasure glow,
If she sigh at others' wo,
If her easy air express
Conscious worth, or soft distress,
Stella's eyes, and air and face,
Charm'd with undiminish'd grace.
If on her we see display'd
Pendant gems, and rich brocade,
If her chintz with less expense
Flows in easy negligence;
Still she lights the conscious flame,
Still her charms appear the same;
If she strikes the vocal strings,
If she's silent, speaks, or sings,
If she sit, or if she move,
Still we love and still approve.
Vain the casual, transient glance,
Which alone can please by chance,
Beauty, which depends on art,
Changing with the changing heart,
Which demands the toilet's aid,
Pendant gems and rich brocade.
I those charms alone can prize
Which from constant nature rise,
Which not circumstance nor dress
E'er can make, or more, or less.

TO A FRIEND.

No more thus brooding o'er yon heap,
With Avarice painful vigils keep;
Still unenjoy'd the present store,
Still endless sighs are breath'd for more,
Oh! quit the shadow, catch the prize,
Which not all India's treasure buys!
To purchase Heaven has gold the power?
Can gold remove the mortal hour?
In life can love be bought with gold?
Are friendship's pleasures to be sold?
No—all that's worth a wish—a thought,
Fair virtue gives unbribed, unbought.
Cease then on trash thy hopes to bind,
Let nobler views engage thy mind.
With science tread the wondrous way,
Or learn the Muses' moral lay;
In social hours indulge thy soul,
Where mirth and temperance mix the bowl
To virtuous love resign thy breast,
And be, by blessing beauty—blest.
Thus taste the feast by nature spread,
Ere youth and all its joys are fled;
Come taste with me the balm of life,
Secure from pomp, and wealth, and strife
I boast whate'er for man was meant,
In health, and Stella, and content;
And scorn—oh! let that scorn be thine—
Mere things of clay that dig the mine.

STELLA IN MOURNING.

When lately Stella's form display'd
The beauties of the gay brocade,
The nymphs, who found their power decline,
Proclaim'd her not so fair as fine.
"Fate! snatch away the bright disguise,
And let the goddess trust her eyes."
Thus blindly pray'd the fretful fair,
And Fate, malicious, heard the prayer;

But, bright[illegible] the sable dress,
As virtue [illegible] distress,
Since Stella [illegible] extends her reign,
Ah! how shall envy soothe her pain?
Th' adoring Youth and envious Fair,
Henceforth shall form one common prayer;
And love and hate alike implore
The skies—"That Stella mourn no more."

TO STELLA.

Not the soft sighs of vernal gales,
The fragrance of the flowery vales,
The murmurs of the crystal rill,
The vocal grove, the verdant hill;
Not all their charms, though all unite,
Can touch my bosom with delight.

Not all the gems on India's shore,
Not all Peru's unbounded store,
Not all the power, nor all the fame,
That heroes, kings, or poets, claim;
Nor knowledge, which the learn'd approve;
To form one wish my soul can move.

Yet Nature's charms allure my eyes,
And knowledge, wealth, and fame I prize;
Fame, wealth, and knowledge I obtain,
Nor seek I Nature's charms in vain;
In lovely Stella all combine;
And, lovely Stella! thou art mine.

VERSES

*Written at the request of a Gentleman to whom a Lady had given a Sprig of Myrtle.**

What hopes, what terrors, does thy gift create;
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate!
The myrtle (ensign of supreme command,
Consign'd by Venus to Melissa's hand)
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Oft avours, oft rejects, a lover's prayer,
In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain.
The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
Th' unhappy lovers' graves the myrtle spreads.
Oh! then, the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart.
Soon must this bough, as you shall fix its doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb.

TO

LADY FIREBRACE.†

AT BURY ASSIZES.

At length must Suffolk's beauties shine in vain,
So long renown'd in B——n's deathless strain?
Thy charms at least, fair Firebrace, might inspire
Some zealous bard to wake the sleeping lyre;
For such thy beauteous mind and lovely face,
Thou seem'st at once, bright nymph, a *Muse* and *Grace*.

TO LYCE,

AN ELDERLY LADY.

Ye nymphs whom starry rays invest,
By flattering poets given,
Who shine, by lavish lovers drest,
In all the pomp of Heaven;

Engross not all the beams on high,
Which gilds a lover's lays,
But, as your sister of the sky
Let Lyce share the praise.

Her silver locks display the moon,
Her brows a cloudy show,
Stripp'd rainbows round her eyes are seen,
And showers from either flow.

Her teeth the night with darkness dyes,
She 's starr'd with pimples o'er;
Her tongue like nimble lightning plies,
And can with thunder roar.

But some Zelinda, while I sing,
Denies my Lyce shines;
And all the pens of Cupid's wing
Attack my gentle lines.

Yet, spite of fair Zelinda's eye,
And all her bards express,
My Lyce makes as good a sky,
And I but flatter less.

ON THE DEATH OF

MR. ROBERT LEVET,

A PRACTISER IN PHYSIC.

Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,
See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind;
Nor letter'd arrogance deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature call'd for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
The power of art without the show.

In misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retired to die.

No summons mock'd by chill delay,
No petty gain disdain'd by pride,

* These verses were first printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1768, p. 439, but were written many years earlier. Elegant as they are, Dr. Johnson assured me, they were composed in the short space of five minutes. N.

† This lady was Bridget, third daughter of Philip Bacon, Esq. of Ipswich, and relict of Philip Evers, Esq. of that town. She became the second wife of Sir Cordell Firebrace, the last Baronet of that name (to whom she brought a fortune of £25,000), July 26, 1737. Being again left a widow in 1759, she was a third time married, April 7, 1762, to William Campbell, Esq. uncle to the present Duke of Argyle, and died July 3, 1782.

The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure th' Eternal Master found
The single talent well employ'd.

The busy day—the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm—his powers were bright,
Though now his *eightieth* year was nigh.

Then, with no fiery throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

EPITAPH ON CLAUDE PHILLIPS,

AN ITINERANT MUSICIAN.*

PHILLIPS! whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power, and hapless love,
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no more,
Find here that calm thou gav'st so oft before;
Sleep undisturb'd within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine.

EPITAPHIUM†

IN

THOMAM HANMER, BARONETTUM.

HONORABILIS admodum Thomas Hanmer, Baronettus,
Wilhelmi Hanmer armigeri, è Peregrinâ Henrici North
De Mildenhall in Com. Suffolciæ Baronetti sorore et hærede,
Filius;
Johannis Hanmer de Hanmer Baronetti
Hæres patruelis
Antiquo gentis suæ et titulo et patrimonio successit.
Duas uxores sortitus est;
Alteram Isabellam, honore à patre derivato, de Arlington comitissam,
Deindè celsissimi principis ducis de Grafton viduam dotariam:
Alteram Elizabetham Thomæ Foulkes de Barton in Com. Suff. armigeri
Filiam et hæredem.
Inter humanitates studia felicitèr enutritus,
Omnes liberalium artium disciplinas avidè arripuit,
Quas morum suavitate haud leviter ornavit.
Postquam excessit ex ephebis,
Continuò inter populares suos famâ eminens,
Et comitatûs sui legatus ad Parliamentum missus,
Ad ardua regni negotia per annos prope triginta se accinxit:
Cumque apud illos amplissimorum virorum ordines
Solent nihil temerè effutire,
Sed *probè* perpensa disertè expromere,
Orator gravis et pressus;
Non minus integritatis quam eloquentiæ laude commendatus,
Æquè omnium, utcunque inter se alioqui dissidentium,
Aures atque animos attraxit.
Annoque demum M.DCC.XIII. regnante Annâ
Felicissimæ florentissimæque memoriæ reginâ,
Ad Prolocutoris cathedram
Communi Senatûs universi voce designatus est:
Quod munus,
Cum nullo tempore non difficile,
Tum illo certè, negotiis
Et variis et lubricis et implicatis difficillimum,
Cum dignitate sustinuit.
Honores alios, et omnia quæ sibi in lucrum cederent munera,
Sedulò detrectavit,
Ut rei totus inserviret publicæ;
Justi rectique tenax,
Et fide in patriam incorruptâ notus.
Ubi omnibus, quæ virum civemque bonum decent, officiis satisfecisset,
Paulatim se à publicis consiliis in otium recipiens,
Inter literarum amœnitates,
Inter ante-actæ vitæ haud insuaves recordationes,
Inter amicorum convictus et amplectus,
Honorificè consenuit;
Et bonis omnibus, quibus charissimus vixit,
Desideratissimus obiit.
Hic, juxta cineres avi, suos condi voluit, et curavit
Gulielmus Bunbury Bttus. nepos et hæres.

PARAPHRASE OF THE ABOVE EPITAPH.

BY DR. JOHNSON.*

THOU who survey'st these walls with curious eye,
Pause at the tomb where Hanmer's ashes lie!
His various worth through varied life attend,
And learn his virtues while thou mourn'st his end.

His force of genius burn'd in early youth,
With thirst of knowledge, and with love of truth,
His learning, join'd with each endearing art,
Charm'd every ear, and gain'd on every heart.

Thus early wise, th' endanger'd realm to aid,
His country call'd him from the studious shade;
In life's first bloom his public toils began,
At once commenced the Senator and man.

In business dexterous, weighty in debate,
Thrice ten long years he labour'd for the State:
In every speech persuasive wisdom flow'd,
In every act refulgent virtue glow'd:
Suspended faction ceased from rage and strife,
To hear his eloquence, and praise his life.

Resistless merit fix'd the Senate's choice
Who hail'd him Speaker with united voice.
Illustrious age! how bright thy glories shone,
When Hanmer fill'd the chair—and Anne the throne!

* These lines are among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies: they are nevertheless recognised as Johnson's in a memorandum of his hand-writing, and were probably written at her request. Phillips was a travelling fiddler up and down Wales, and was greatly celebrated for his performance.

† At Hanmer church in Flintshire.

* This Paraphrase is inserted in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies. The Latin is there said to be written by Dr. Freind. Of the person whose memory it celebrates, a copious account may be seen in the Appendix to the Supplement to the Biographia Britannica.

Then when dark arts obscured each fierce debate,
When mutual frauds perplex'd the maze of state,
The moderator firmly mild appear'd—
Beheld with love—with veneration heard.
This task perform'd—he sought no gainful post,
Nor wish'd to glitter at his country's cost;
Strict on the right he kept his steadfast eye,
With temperate zeal and wise anxiety;
Nor e'er from Virtue's paths was lured aside,
To pluck the flowers of pleasure or of pride.
Her gifts despised, Corruption blush'd and fled,
And Fame pursued him where Conviction led.
Age call'd, at length, his active mind to rest,
With honour sated, and with cares opprest;
To letter'd ease retired, and honest mirth,
To rural grandeur and domestic worth:
Delighted still to please mankind, or mend,
The patriot's fire yet sparkled in the friend.
Calm Conscience, then, his former life survey'd,
And recollected toils endear'd the shade,
Till Nature call'd him to the general doom,
And Virtue's sorrow dignified his tomb.

TO MISS HICKMAN.*

PLAYING ON THE SPINNET.

Bright Stella, form'd for universal reign,
Too well you know to keep the slaves you gain;
When in your eyes resistless lightnings play,
Awed into love, our conquer'd hearts obey,
And yield reluctant to despotic sway:
But when your music sooths the raging pain,
We bid propitious Heaven prolong your reign,
We bless the tyrant, and we hug the chain.
When old Timotheus struck the vocal string,
Ambition's fury fired the Grecian king:
Unbounded projects labouring in his mind,
He pants for room, in one poor world confined.
Thus waked to rage, by music's dreadful power,
He bids the sword destroy, the flame devour.
Had Stella's gentle touches moved the lyre,
Soon had the monarch felt a nobler fire;
No more delighted with destructive war,
Ambitious only now to please the fair;
Resign'd his thirst of empire to her charms,
And found a thousand worlds in Stella's arms.

PARAPHRASE OF PROVERBS.

Chap. VI. Verses 6—11.

"Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard."†

Turn on the prudent ant thy heedful eyes,
Observe her labours, sluggard, and be wise:
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away,
To snatch the blessings of the plenteous day;
When fruitful summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.

How long shall Sloth usurp thy useless hours,
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers:
While artful shades thy downy couch enclose,
And soft solicitation courts repose?
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
Year chases year with unremitted flight,
Till Want, now following, fraudulent and slow,
Shall spring to seize thee like an ambush'd foe.

HORACE, LIB. IV. ODE VII.

TRANSLATED.

The snow dissolved, no more is seen,
The fields and woods, behold! are green;
The changing year renews the plain,
The rivers know their banks again;
The sprightly nymph and naked grace;
The mazy dance together trace;
The changing year's successive plan,
Proclaims mortality to man;
Rough winter's blasts to spring give way,
Spring yields to summer's sovereign ray;
Then summer sinks in autumn's reign,
And winter chills the world again;
Her losses soon the moon supplies,
But wretched man, when once he lies
Where Priam and his sons are laid,
Is nought but ashes and a shade.
Who knows if Jove, who counts our score
Will toss us in a morning more?
What with your friend you nobly share,
At least you rescue from your heir.
Not you, Torquatus, boast of Rome,
When Minos once has fix'd your doom,
Or eloquence, or splendid birth,
Or virtue, shall restore to earth.
Hippolytus, unjustly slain,
Diana calls to life in vain;
Nor can the might of Theseus rend
The chains of Hell that hold his friend.

Nov. 1784.

☞ *The following* Translations, Parodies, *and* Burlesque Verses, *most of them extempore, are taken from* Anecdotes *of* Dr. Johnson, *published by* Mrs. Piozzi.

ANACREON, ODE IX.

Lovely courier of the sky,
Whence and whither dost thou fly?
Scattering, as thy pinions play,
Liquid fragrance all the way:
Is it business? is it love?
Tell me, tell me, gentle dove.
Soft Anacreon's vows I bear,
Vows to Myrtale the fair;
Graced with all that charms the heart,
Blushing nature, smiling art.
Venus, courted by an ode,
On the bard her dove bestow'd;
Vested with a master's right,
Now Anacreon rules my flight;
His the letters that you see,
Weighty charge consign'd to me;
Think not yet my service hard,
Joyless task without reward;
Smiling at my master's gates,
Freedom my return awaits;
But the liberal grant in vain
Tempts me to be wild again.

* These lines, which have been communicated by Dr. Turton, son to Mrs. Turton, the lady to whom they are addressed by her maiden name of Hickman, must have been written at least as early as the year 1734, as that was the year of her marriage: at how much earlier a period of Dr. Johnson's life they may have been written, is not known.

† In Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, but now printed from the original in Dr. Johnson's own hand-writing.

Can a prudent dove decline
Blissful bondage such as mine?
Over hills and fields to roam,
Fortune's guest without a home;
Under leaves to hide one's head,
Slightly shelter'd, coarsely fed:
Now my better lot bestows
Sweet repast, and soft repose;
Now the generous bowl I sip
As it leaves Anacreon's lip:
Void of care, and free from dread,
From his fingers snatch his bread;
Then, with luscious plenty gay,
Round his chamber dance and play;
Or from wine, as courage springs,
O'er his face extend my wings;
And when feast and frolic tire,
Drop asleep upon his lyre.
This is all, be quick and go,
More than all thou canst not know;
Let me now my pinions ply,
I have chatter'd like a pye.

LINES

Written in Ridicule of certain Poems published in 1777.

Wheresoe'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new;
Endless labour all along;
Endless labour to be wrong;
Phrase that time hath flung away,
Uncouth words in disarray,
Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
Ode, and elegy, and sonnet.

PARODY OF A TRANSLATION

From the Medea of Euripides.

Err shall they not, who resolute explore,
Times gloomy backward with judicious eyes;
And scanning right the practices of yore,
Shall deem our hoar progenitors unwise.

They to the dome where smoke, with curling play,
Announced the dinner to the regions round,
Summon'd the singer blithe and harper gay,
And aided wine with dulcet-streaming sound.

The better use of notes, or sweet or shrill,
By quivering string or modulated wind;
Trumpet or lyre—to their harsh bosoms chill
Admission ne'er had sought, or could not find.

Oh! send them to the sullen mansions dun,
Her baleful eyes where Sorrow rolls around;
Where gloom-enamour'd Mischief loves to dwell,
And Murder, all blood-bolter'd, schemes the wound.

Then cates luxuriant pile the spacious dish,
And purple nectar glads the festive hour;
The guest, without a want, without a wish,
Can yield no room to music's soothing power.

TRANSLATION

Of the two first Stanzas of the Song "Rio Verde, Rio Verde," printed in Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.

AN IMPROMPTU.

Glassy water, glassy water,
Down whose current, clear and strong,
Chiefs confused in mutual slaughter,
Moor and Christian, roll along.

IMITATION

OF

THE STYLE OF ****.

Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
Wearing out life's evening gray,
Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell,
What is bliss, and which the way?

Thus I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
Scarce repress'd the starting tear,
When the hoary sage reply'd,
Come, my lad, and drink some beer!

BURLESQUE

Of the following Lines of Lopez de Vega.

AN IMPROMPTU.

Se acquien los leones vence
Vence una muger hermosa
O ei de flaco averguença
O ella di ser mais furiosa.

If the man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father.

TRANSLATION

Of the following Lines at the end of Baretti's Easy Phraseology.

AN IMPROMPTU.

Viva! viva la padrona!
Tutta bella, e tutta buona,
La padrona è un angiolella
Tutta buona e tutta bella;
Tutta bella e tutta buona;
Viva! viva la padrona!

Long may live my lovely Hetty!
Always young, and always pretty!
Always pretty, always young
Live, my lovely Hetty, long!
Always young, and always pretty,
Long may live my lovely Hetty!

IMPROVISO TRANSLATION

Of the following Distich on the Duke of Modena's running away from the Comet in 1742 *or* 1743

Se al venir vostro i principi se n' vanno
Deh venga ogni dì———durate un anno.

If at your coming princes disappear,
Comets! come every day——— and stay a year.

IMPROVISO TRANSLATION

Of the following Lines of M. Benserade à son Lit.

Theatre des ris, et des pleurs,
Lit! où je nais, et où je meurs,
Tu nous fais voir comment voisins,
Sont nos plaisirs, et nos chagrins.

In bed we laugh, in bed we cry,
And born in bed, in bed we die;
The near approach a bed may show
Of human bliss to human wo.

EPITAPH FOR MR. HOGARTH.

THE hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew th' essential form of grace;
Here closed in death th' attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face.

TRANSLATION

Of the following Lines written under a Print representing Persons Skating.

SUR un mince crystal l'hyver conduit leurs pas,
Le précipice est sous la glace:
Telle est de nos plaisirs la lég re surface:
Glissez, mortels; n'appuyez pas.

O'ER ice the rapid skater flies,
With sport above, and death below;
Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
Thus lightly touch and quickly go.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION

Of the same.

O'ER crackling ice, o'er gulfs profound,
With nimble glide the skaters play;
O'er treacherous Pleasure's flowery ground
Thus lightly skim and haste away.

TO MRS. THRALE

On her completing her thirty-fifth year.

AN IMPROMPTU.

OFT in danger, yet alive
We are come to thirty-five;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five!
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to dive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five;
For, howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines from thirty-five.
He that ever hopes to thrive
Must begin by thirty-five;
And all who wisely wish to wive
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION

Of an air in the Clemenza de Tito of Metastasio beginning "Deh se piacermi vuoi."

WOULD you hope to gain my heart,
Bid your teasing doubts depart;
He, who blindly trusts, will find
Faith from every generous mind;
He, who still expects deceit,
Only teaches how to cheat.

TRANSLATION

Of a speech of Aquileio in the Adriano of Metastasio, begining "Tu che in corte invechiasti."

GROWN old in courts, thou surely art not one
Who keeps the rigid rules of ancient honour;
Who skill'd to sooth a foe with looks of kind-
To sink the fatal precipice before him, [ness,
And then lament his fall by seeming friendship;
Open to all, true only to thyself,
Thou know'st those arts which blast with envious praise,
Which aggravate a fault with feign'd excuses,
And drive discountenanced virtue from the throne;
That leave the blame of rigour to the prince,
And of his every gift usurp the merit;
That hide in seeming zeal a wicked purpose,
And only build upon another's ruin.

FRIENDSHIP,

AN ODE.

[This originally appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine, for the year 1743. See Boswell's Life of Johnson under that year. It was afterwards printed in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, in 1766, with several variations, which are pointed out below. J. B.]

FRIENDSHIP! peculiar boon of heaven,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only given,
To all the lower world denied.

While love, unknown among the blest,
Parent of thousand wild desires,
The savage and the human breast
Torments alike with raging fires;

With bright, but oft destructive, gleam,
Alike, o'er all his lightnings fly;
Thy lambent glories only beam
Around the favourites of the sky.

Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys
On fools and villains ne'er descend.
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs,
And hugs a flatterer for a friend.

Directress of the brave and just,
O guide us through life's darksome way!
And let the tortures of mistrust
On selfish bosoms only prey.

Nor shall thine ardours cease to glow,
When souls to blissful climes remove:
What raised our virtue here below,
Shall aid our happiness above.

Stanza 1. This stanza is omitted in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, and instead of it we have the following, which may be suspected from internal evidence not to have been Johnson's.

When virtues kindred virtues meet,
And sister souls together join,
Thy pleasures, permanent as great,
Are all transporting, all divine.

Stanza 2, line 2d. Parent of rage and hot desires
Mrs. W.
line 4th. Inflames alike with equal fires.
Stanza 4, line 3d. In vain for thee the *monarch* sighs,

Stanza 6, line 1st. O! shall thy flames then cease to glow.

TRANSLATION

FROM THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES, V. 190.

[This was written by Johnson for his friend, Dr. Burney, and was inserted as the work of "A learned friend," in that gentleman's History of Music, Vol. II. p. 340. It has always been ascribed to Johnson; but to put the matter beyond a doubt, Mr. Malone ascertained the fact by applying to Dr. Burney himself. J. B.]

THE rites derived from ancient days
With thoughtless reverence we praise,
The rites that taught us to combine
The joys of music and of wine,

And bid the feast, and song, and bowl,
O'erfill the saturated soul:
But ne'er the flute or lyre applied
To cheer despair and soften pride,
Nor call them to the gloomy cells,
Where Want repines and Vengeance swells;
Where Hate sits musing to betray,
And Murder meditates his prey,
To dens of guilt and shades of care,
Ye sons of melody repair;
Nor deign the festive dome to cloy,
With superfluities of joy.
Ah! little needs the minstrel's power,
To speed the light convivial hour.
The board with varied plenty crown'd,
May spare the luxuries of sound.

POEMATA.

MESSIA.*

Ex alieno ingenio poeta, ex suo tantum versificator.
SCALIG. Poet.

TOLLITE concentum, Solymææ tollite nymphæ,
Nil mortale loquor; cœlum mihi carminis alta
Materies; poscunt gravius cœlestia plectrum.
Muscosi fontes, sylvestria tecta valete,
Aonidesque Deæ, et mendacis somnia Pindi:
Tu, mihi qui flammâ movisti pectora sancti
Sidereâ Isaiæ, dignos accende furores!
Immatura calens rapitur per secula vates
Sic orsus—Qualis rerum mihi nascitur ordo!
Virgo! virgo parit! felix radicibus arbor
Jessæis surgit, mulcentesque æthera flores
Cœlestes lambunt animæ, ramisque columba,
Nuncia sacra Dei, plaudentibus insidet alis.
Nectareos rores, alimentaque mitia cœlum
Præbeat, et tacite fœcundos irriget imbres.
Huc, fœdat quos lepra, urit quos febris, adeste,
Dia salutares spirant medicamina rami;
Hic requies fessis: non sacra sævit in umbra
Vis Boreæ gelida, aut rapidi violentia solis.
Irrita vanescent prisca vestigia fraudis,
Justitiæque manus pretio intemerata bilancem
Attollet reducis; bellis prætendet olivas
Compositis pax alma suas, terrasque revisens
Sedatas niveo virtus lucebit amictu:
Volvantur celeres anni! lux purpuret ortum
Expectata diu! naturæ claustra refringens,
Nascere, magne puer! tibi primas, ecce, corollas
Deproperat tellus, fundit tibi munera quicquid
Carpit Arabs, hortis quicquid frondescit Eois.
Altius, en! Lebanon gaudentia culmina tollit.
En! summo exultant nutantes vertice sylvæ.
Mittit aromaticas vallis Saronica nubes,
Et juga Carmeli recreant fragrantia cœlum.
Deserti lætâ mollescunt aspera voce,
Auditur Deus! eccc Deus! reboantia circum,
Saxa sonant, Deus! ecce Deus! deflectitur æther,
Demissumque Deum tellus capit; ardua cedrus,
Gloria sylvarum, dominum inclinata salutet.
Surgite convalles, tumidi subsidite montes!
Sternite saxa viam, rapidi discedite fluctus;
En! quem turba diu cecinerunt cnthea, vates,
En! salvator adest; vultus agnoscite cæci
Divinos, surdos sacra vox permulceat aures.
Ille cutim spissam visus hebetare vetabit,
Reclusisque oculis infundet amabile lumen;
Obstrictasque diu linguas in carmina solvet.
Ille vias vocis pandet, flexusque liquentis
Harmoniæ purgata novos mirabitur auris.
Accrescunt teneris tactu nova robora nervis.
Consuetus fulcro innixus reptare bacilli
Nunc saltu capreas; nunc cursu provocat euros.
Non planctus, non mœsta sonant suspiria; pectus
Singultans mulcet, lachrymantes tergit ocellos.
Vincla coercebunt luctantem adamantina mortem
Æternoque Orci dominator vulnere languens
Invalidi raptos sceptri plorabit honores.
Ut qua dulce strepent scatebræ, qua lata virescunt
Pascua, qua blandum spirat purissimus aer.
Pastor agit pecudes, teneros modo suscipit agnos
Et gremio fotis selectas porrigit herbas,
Amissas modo quærit oves, revocatque vagantes;
Fidus adest custos, seu nox furat horrida nimbis,
Sive dies medius morientia torreat arva.
Postera sic pastor divinus secla beabit,
Et curas felix patrias testabitur orbis.
Non ultra infestis concurrent agmina signis,
Hostiles oculis flammas jaculantia torvis;
Non litui accendent bellum, non campus ahenis
Triste coruscabit radiis; dabit hasta recusa
Vomerem, et in falcem rigidus curvabitur ensis.
Atria, pacis opus, surgent, finemque caduci
Natus ad optatum perducet cœpta parentis.
Qui duxit sulcos, illi teret area messem,
Et seræ texent vites umbracula proli.
Attoniti dumeta vident inculto coloni
Suave rubere rosis, sitientesque inter arenas
Garrula mirantur salientis murmura rivi.
Per saxa, ignivomi nuper spelæa draconis.
Canna viret, juncique tremit variabilis umbra.
Horruit implexo qua vallis sente, figuræ
Surgit amans abies teretis, buxique sequaces
Artificis frondent dextræ; palmisque rubeta
Aspera, odoratæ cedunt mala gramina myrto
Per valles sociata lupo lasciviet agna,
Cumque leone petet tutus præsepe juvencus.
Florea mansuetæ petulantes vincula tigri
Per ludum pueri injicient, et fessa colubri
Membra viatoris recreabunt frigore linguæ.
Serpentes teneris nil jam lethale micantes
Tractabit palmis infans, motusque trisulcæ
Ridebit linguæ innocuos, squamasque virentes
Aureaque admirans rutilantis fulgura cristæ.
Indue reginam, turritæ frontis honores
Tolle Salema sacros, quam circum gloria pennas
Explicat, incinctam radiatæ luce tiaræ!

* This translation has been severely criticised by Dr. Warton, in his edition of Pope, vol. i. p. 105. 8vo. 1797. It certainly contains some expressions that are not classical. Let it be remembered, however, that it was a college exercise, performed with great rapidity, and was at first praised beyond all suspicion of defect.—C.

En! formosa tibi spatiosa per atria, proles
Ordinibus surgit densis, vitamque requirit
Impatiens, lenteque fluentes increpat annos.
Ecce peregrinis fervent tua limina turbis;
Barbarus en! clarum divino lumine templum
Ingreditur, cultuque tuo mansuescere gaudet
Cinnameos cumulos, Nabathæi muncra veris,
Ecce cremant genibus tritæ regalibus aræ!
Solis Ophyræis crudum tibi montibus aurum
Maturant radii; tibi balsama sudat Idume.
Ætheris en portas sacrofulgore micantes
Cœlicolæ pandunt, torrentis aurea lucis
Flumina prorumpunt; non posthac sole rubescet
India nascenti, placidæve argentea noctis
Luna vices revehet; radios pater ipse diei
Proferet archetypos; cœlestis gaudia lucis
Ipso fonte bibes, quæ circumfusa beatam
Regiam inundabit, nullis cessura tenebris.
Littora deficiens arentia deseret æquor;
Sidera fumabunt, diro labefacta tremore
Saxa cadent, solidique liquescent robora montis:
Tu secura tamen confusa elementa videbis,
Lætaque Messia semper dominabere rege,
Pollicitis firmata Dei, stabilita ruinis.

[Jan. 20, 21, 1773.]

Vitæ qui varias vices
Rerum perpetuus temperat Arbiter,
Læto cedere lumini
Noctis tristitiam qui gelidæ jubet,
Acri sanguine turgidos,
Obductosque oculos nubibus humidis
Sanari voluit meos;
Et me, cuncta beans cui nocuit dies,
Luci reddidit et mihi.
Qua te laude, Deus, qua prece prosequar?
Sacri discipulis libri
Te semper studiis utilibus colam:
Grates, summe Pater, tuis
Recte qui fruitur muneribus, dedit.

[Dec. 25, 1779.]

Nunc dies Christo memoranda nato
Fulsit, in pectus mihi fonte purum
Gaudium sacro fluat, et benigni
Gratia Cœli!

Christe, da tutam trepido quietem,
Christe, spem præsta stabilem timenti;
Da fidem certam, precibusque fidis
Annue, Christe.

[In Lecto, die Passionis, Apr. 13, 1781.]

Summe Deus, qui semper amas quodcunque creâsti;
Judice quo, scelerum est pœnituisse salus;
Da veteres noxas animo sic flere novato,
Per Christum ut veniam sit reperire mihi.

[In Lecto, Dec. 25, 1782.]

Spe non inani confugis,
Peccator, ad latus meum;
Quod poscis, haud unquam tibi
Negabitur solatium.

[Nocti, inter 16 et 17 Junii, 1783.*]

Summe Pater, quodcunque tuum† de corpore [velit:
Numen‡
Hoc statuat, || precibus§ Christus adesse
Ingenio parcas, nec sit mihi culpa rogâsse,¶
Qua solum potero parte, placere** tibi.

[Cal. Jan. in lecto, ante lucem. 1784.]

Summe dator vitæ, naturæ æterne magister,
Causarum series quo moderante fluit,
Respice quem subijet senium, morbique seniles,
Quem terret vitæ meta propinqua suæ.
Respice inutiliter lapsi quem pœnitet ævi;
Recte ut pœniteat, respice, magne parens

Pater benigne, summa semper lenitas,
Crimine gravatam plurimo mentem leva:
Concede veram pœnitentiam, precor,
Concede agendam legibus vitam tuis.
Sacri vagantes luminis gressus face
Rege et tuere, quæ nocent pellens procul;
Veniam petenti, summe da veniam, pater;
Veniæque sancta pacis adde gaudia:
Sceleris ut expers, omni et vacuus metu,
Te, mente purâ, mente tranquillâ colam:
Mihi dona morte hæc impetret Christus suâ

[Jan. 18, 1784.]

Summe Pater, puro collustra lumine pectus,
Anxietas noceat ne tenebrosa mihi.
In me sparsa manu virtutum semina larga
Sic ale, proveniat messis ut ampla boni.
Noctes atque dies animo spes læta recurset,
Certa mihi sancto flagret amore fides.
Certa vetat dubitare fides, spes læta timere.
Velle vetet cuiquam non bene sanctus amor.
Da, ne sint permissa, Pater, mihi præmia frustra,
Et colere, et leges semper amare tuas. [tra,
Hæc mihi, quo gentes, quo secula, Christe, piâsti,
Sanguine, precanti promereare tuo!

[Feb. 27, 1784.]

Mens mea, quid quereris? veniet tibi mollior hora,
In summo ut videas numine læta patrem,
Divinam insontes iram placavit Iesus;
Nunc est pro pœna pœnituisse reis.

CHRISTIANUS PERFECTUS.

Qui cupit in sanctos Christo cogente referri,
Abstergat mundi labem, nec gaudia carnis
Captans, nec fastu tumidus, semperque futuro
Instet, et evellens terroris spicula corde,
Suspiciat tandem clementem in numine patrem.
Huic quoque, nec genti nec sectæ noxius ulli,

---

* The night above referred to by Dr. Johnson, was that in which a paralytic stroke had deprived him of his voice, and, in the anxiety he felt lest it should likewise have impaired his understanding, he composed the above lines, and said, concerning them, that he knew at the time that they were not good, but then that he deemed his discerning this to be sufficient for the quieting the anxiety before mentioned, as it showed him that his power of judging was not diminished.

† Al. tuæ. ‡ Al. leges. || Al. statuant
§ Al. votis. ¶ Al. precari. ** Al. litare.

Sit sacer orbis amor, miseris qui semper adesse
Gestiat, et, nullo pietatis limite clausus,
Cunctorum ignoscat vitiis, pietate fruatur.
Ardeat huic toto sacer ignis pectore, possit
Ut vitam, poscat si res, impendere vero.
Cura placere Deo sit prima sit ultima, sanctæ
Irruptum vitæ cupiat servare tenorem;
Et sibi, delirans quanquam et peccator in horas
Displiceat, servet tutum sub pectore rectum:
Nec natet, et nunc has partes, nunc eligat illas,
Nec dubitet quem dicat herum, sed, totus in uno,
Se fidum addicat Christo, mortalia temnens.
Sed timeat semper, caveatque ante omnia, turbæ
Ne stolidæ similis, leges sibi segreget audax
Quas servare velit, leges quas lentus omittat,
Plenum opus effugiens, aptans juga mollia collo,
Sponte sua demens; nihilum decedere summæ
Vult Deus, at qui cuncta dedit tibi, cuncta reposcit.
Denique perpetuo contendit in ardua nisu,
Auxilioque Dei fretus, jam mente serena
Pergit, et imperiis sentit se dulcibus actum.
Paulatim mores, animum, vitamque refingit
Effigiemque Dei, quantum servare licebit,
Induit, et, terris major, cœlestia spirat.

Æterne rerum conditor,
Salutis æternæ dator;
Felicitatis sedibus
Qui nec scelestos exigis,
Quoscumque scelerum pœnitet;
Da, Christe, pœnitentiam,
Veniamque, Christe, da mihi;
Ægrum trahenti spiritum
Succurre præsens corpori,
Multo gravatam crimine
Mentem benignus alleva.

Luce collustret mihi pectus alma,
Pellat et tristes animi tenebras,
Nec sinat semper tremere ac dolere,
Gratia Christi:
Me Pater tandem reducem benigno
Summus amplexu foveat, beato
Me gregi Sanctus socium beatum
Spiritus addat.

JEJUNIUM ET CIBUS.

Serviat ut menti corpus jejunia serva,
Ut mens utatur corpore, sume cibos.

AD URBANUM.* 1738.

Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,
Cui fronte sertum in erudita
Perpetuo viret, et virebit;
Quid moliatur gens imitantium,
Quid et minetur, sollicitus parum,
Vacare solis perge Musis,
Juxta animo studiisque felix.
Linguæ procacis plumbea spicula,
Fidens, superbo frange silentio;
Victrix per obstantes catervas
Sedulitas animosa tendet.
Intende nervos fortis, inanibus
Risurus olim nisibus æmuli;
Intende jam nervos, habebis
Participes opera Camœnas.
Non ulla Musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.
Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis.

IN RIVUM A MOLA STOANA LITCH FELDIÆ DIFFLUENTEM.

Errat adhuc vitreus per prata virentia rivus,
Quo toties lavi membra tenella puer;
Hic delusa rudi frustrabar brachia motu,
Dum docuit blanda voce natare pater.
Fecerunt rami latebras, tenebrisque diurnis
Pendula secretas abdidit arbor aquas.
Nunc veteres duris perière sccuribus umbræ,
Longinquisque oculis nuda lavacra patent.
Lympha tamen cursus agit indefessa perennis,
Tectaque qua fluxit, nunc et aperta fluit.
Quid ferat externi velox, quid deterat ætas,
Tu quoque securus res age, Nise, tuas.

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΥΕΑΤΟΝ.*

[*Post Lexicon Anglicanum auctum et emendatum.*]

Lexicon ad finem longo luctamine tandem
Scaliger ut duxit, tenuis pertæsus opellæ,
Vile indignatus studium, nugasque molestas
Ingemit exosus, scribendaque lexica mandat
Damnatis, pœnam pro pœnis omnibus unam.
Ille quidem recte, sublimis, doctus et acer,
Quem decuit majora sequi, majoribus aptum,
Qui veterum modo facta ducum, modo carmina vatum,
Gesserat et quicquid virtus, sapientia quicquid
Dixerat, imperiique vices, cœlique meatus,
Ingentemque animo seclorum volveret orbem.
Fallimur exemplis; temere sibi turba scholarum
Ima tuas credit permitti Scaliger iras.
Quisque suum nórit modulum; tibi, prime virorum,
Ut studiis sperem, aut ausim par esse querelis,
Non mihi sorte datum; lenti seu sanguinis obsint
Frigora, seu nimium longa jacuisse veterno,
Sive mihi mentem dederit natura minorem.
Te sterili functum cura, vocumque salebris
Tuto eluctatum spatiis sapientia dia
Excipit æthereis, ars omnis plaudit amico,
Linguarumque omni terrâ discordia concors
Multiplici reducem circumsonat ore magistrum.
Me, pensi immunis cum jam mihi reddor inertis
Desidiæ sors dura manet, graviorque labore
Tristis et atra quies, et tardæ tædia vitæ.
Nascuntur curis curæ, vexatque dolorum
Importuna cohors, vacuæ mala somnia mentis.
Nunc clamosa juvant nocturnæ gaudia mensæ,
Nunc loca sola placent; frustra te, Somne, recumbens
Alme voco, impatiens noctis metuensque diei.

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* See Gent. Mag. Vol. VIII. p. 156; and see also the Introduction to Vol. LIV.

* See the Life of Dr. Johnson.

Omnia percurro trepidus, circum omnia lustro,
Si qua usquam pateat melioris semita vitæ,
Nec quid agam invenio; meditatus grandia, cogo:
Notior ipse mihi fieri, incultumque fateri
Pectus, et ingenium vano se robore jactans.
Ingenium, nisi materiem doctrina ministrat,
Cessat inops rerum, ut torpet, si marmoris absit
Copia, Phidiaci fœcunda potentia cœli.
Quicquid agam, quocunque ferar, conatibus obstat
Res angusta domi, et macræ penuria mentis.
Non rationis opes animus, nunc parta recensens
Conspicit aggestas, et se miratur in illis,
Nec sibi de gaza præsens quod postulat usus
Summus adesse jubet celsa dominator ab arce;
Non, operum serie seriem dum computat ævi,
Præteritis fruitur, lætos aut sumit honores
Ipse sui judex, actæ bene munera vitæ;
Sed sua regna videns, loca nocte silentia late
Horret, ubi vanæ species, umbræque fugaces,
Et rerum volitant raræ per inane figuræ.
Quid faciam? tenebrisne pigram damnare senectam
Restat? an accingar studiis gravioribus audax?
Aut, hoc si nimium est, tandem nova lexica poscam?

AD THOMAM LAURENCE,

MEDICUM DOCTISSIMUM,

Cum filium peregre agentem desiderio nimis tristi prosequeretur.

Fateris ergo, quod populus solet
Crepare vecors, nil sapientiam
Prodesse vitæ, literasque,
In dubiis dare terga rebus.

Tu, queis laborat sors hominum, mala,
Nec vincis acer, nec pateris pius:
Te mille succorem potentem
Destitut medicina mentis.

Per cæca noctis tædia turbidæ,
Pigræ per horas lucis inutiles,
Torpesque, languescisque, curis
Solicitus nimis heu! paternis.

Tandem dolori plus satis est datum,
Exurge fortis, hunc animis opus,
Te, docta, Laurenti, vetustas,
Te medici revocant labores.

Permitte summo quicquid habes Patri,
Permitte fidens; et muliebribus,
Amice majorem, querelis
Redde tuis, tibi redde mentem.

IN THEATRO, MARCH 8, 1771.

Tertii verso quater orbe lustri,
Quid theatrales tibi, Crispe, pompe?
Quam decet canos male litteratos
Sera voluptas!

Tene mulceri fidibus canoris?
Tene cantorum modulis stupere?
Tene per pictas oculo elegante
Currere formas?

Inter æquales, sine felle liber,
Codices, veri studiosus, inter
Rectius vives. Sua quisque carpat
Gaudia gratus.

Lusibus gaudet puer otiosis,
Luxus oblectat juvenem theatri,
At seni fluxo sapienter uti
Tempore restat.

INSULA KENNETHI, INTER HEBRIDAS.

Parva quidem regio, sed religione priorum
Clara, Caledonias panditur inter aquas.
Voce ubi Cennethus populos domuisse feroces
Dicitur, et vanos dedocuisse deos.
Huc ego delatus placido per cærula cursu,
Scire locus volui quid daret iste novi.
Illic Leniades humili regnabat in aula,
Leniades, magnis nobilitatis avis.
Una duas cepit casa cum genitore puellas,
Quas Amor undarum crederet esse deas.
Nec tamen inculti gelidis latuere sub antris,
Accola Danubii qualia sævus habet.
Mollia non desunt vacuæ solatia vitæ,
Sive libros poscant otia, sive lyram.
Fulserat illa dies, legis qua docta supernæ
Spes hominum et curas gens procul esse jubet.
Ut precibus justas avertat numinis iras
Et summi accendat pectus amore boni.
Ponte inter strepitus non sacri munera cultus
Cessarunt, pietas hic quoque cura fuit.
Nil opus est æris sacra de turre sonantis
Admonitu, ipsa suas nunciat hora vices.
Quid, quod sacrifici versavit fœmina libros?
Sint pro legitimis pura labella sacris.
Quo vagor ulterius? quod ubique requiritur hic est,
Hic secura quies, hic et honestus amor.

SKIA.

Ponti profundis clausa recessibus,
Strepens procellis, rupibus obsita,
Quam grata defesso virentem,
Skia, sinum nebulosa pandis!

His cura, credo, sedibus exulat;
His blanda certe pax habitat locis;
Non ira, non mœror quietis
Insidias meditatur horis.

At non cavatâ rupe latescere,
Menti nec ægræ montibus aviis
Prodest vagari, nec frementes
In specula numerare fluctus.

Humana virtus non sibi sufficit;
Datur nec æquum cuique animum sibi
Parare posse, utcunque jactet
Grandiloquus nimis alta Zeno.

Exæstuantis pectoris impetum
Rex summe, solus tu regis, arbiter;
Mentisque, te tollente, fluctus;
Te, resident, moderante fluctus.

ODE DE SKIA INSULA.

Permeo terras ubi nuda rupes
Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,

Torva ubi rident steriles coloni
Rura labores.

Pervagor gentes hominum ferorum,
Vita ubi nullo decorata cultu
Squallet informis, tigurique fumis
Fœda latescit.

Inter erroris salebrosa longi,
Inter ignotæ strepitus loquelæ,
Quot modis, mecum, quid agat, requiro,
Thralia dulcis?

Seu viri curas, pia nupta mulcet,
Seu fovet mater sobolem benigna,
Sive cum libris novitate pascit
Sedula mentem·

Sit memor nostri, fideique solvat
Fida mercedem, meritoque blandum
Thraliæ discant resonare nomen
Littora Skiæ.

SPES.

April 16, 1783.

Hora sic peragit citata cursum;
Sic diem sequitur dies fugacem!
Spes novas nova lux parit, secunda
Spondens omnia credulis homullis;
Spes ludit stolidas, metuque cæco
Lux angit, miseros ludens homullos.

VERSUS,

COLLARI CAPRÆ DOMINI BANKS INSCRIBENDI.

Perpetui, ambitâ bis terrâ præmia lactis
Hæc habet, altrici capra secunda Jovis.

AD FŒMINAM QUANDAM GENEROSAM QUÆ LIBERTATIS CAUSÆ IN SERMONE PATROCINATA FUERAT.

Liber ut esse velim suasisti, pulchra Maria:
Ut maneam liber, pulchra Maria, vale.

JACTURA TEMPORIS.

Hora perit furtim lætis, mens temporis ægra
Pigritiam incusat, nec minus hora perit.

Quas navis recipit, quantum sit pondus aquarum,
Dimidium tanti ponderis intret onus.

Quot vox missa pedes abit horæ parte secunda?
Undecies centum denos quater adde duosque.

Εἰς ΒΙΡΧΙΟΝ.*

Εἶδεν Ἀληθείη πρώην χαίρουσα γράφοντα
Ἡρώων τε βίους Βίρχιον, ἠδὲ σοφῶν,
Καὶ βίον, εἶπεν, ὅταν βίψης θανάτοιο βέλεσσι,
Σοῦ ποτε γραψόμενον Βίρχιον ἄλλον ἔχοις.

* The Rev. Dr. Thomas Birch, author of the History of the Royal Society, and other works of note.

Εἰς τὸ τῆς ΕΛΙΣΣΗΣ περὶ τῶν Ὀνείρων Αἴνιγμα.*

Τῇ κάλλους δυνάμει τί τέλος; Ζεὺς πάντα δέδωκεν
Κύπριδι, μήδ' αὐτοῦ σκῆπτρα μέμηλε Θεῷ.
Ἐκ Διὸς ἐστὶν Ὄναρ, θεῖός ποτ' ἔγραψεν Ὅμηρος,
Ἀλλὰ τόδ' εἰς ὑπνοὺς Κύπρις ἔπεμψεν Ὄναρ.
Ζεὺς μοῦνος φλογόεντι πόλεις ἔκπερσε κεραυνῷ,
Ὄμμασι λαμπρὰ Διὸς Κύπρις δίστὰ φέρει.

IN ELIZÆ ENIGMA.

Quis formæ modus imperio? Venus arrogat audax
Omnia, nec curæ sunt sua sceptra Jovi.
Ab Jove Mæonides descendere somnia narrat;
Hæc veniunt Cypriæ somnia missa Deæ,
Jupiter unus erat, qui stravit fulmine gentes;
Nunc armant Veneris lumina tela Jovis.

† O qui benignus crimina ignoscis, Pater,
Facilisque semper confitenti ades reo,
Aurem faventem precibus O præbe meis,
Scelerum catenâ me laborantem gravè
Æterna tandem liberet clementia,
Ut summa laus sit, summa Christo gloria.

Per vitæ tenebras rerumque incerta vagantem
Numine præsenti me tueare, Pater!
Me ducat lux sancta, Deus, lux sancta sequatur;
Usque regat gressus, gratia fida meos.
Sic peragam tua jussa libens, accinctus ad omne
Mandatum, vivam, sic moriarque tibi.

Me, Pater omnipotens, de puro respice cœlo,
Quem mœstum et timidum crimina dira gravant;
Da veniam pacemque mihi, da, mente serena,
Ut tibi quæ placeant, omnia promptus agam.
Solvi, quo Christus cunctis delicta redemit,
Et pro me pretium, tu patiare, Pater.

[Dec. 5. 1784.‡]

Summe Deus, cui cæca patent penetralia cordis,
Quem nulla anxietas, nulla cupido fugit;
Quem nil vafrities peccantum subdola celat;
Omni qui spectans, omnia ubique regis;
Mentibus afflatu terrenas ejice sordes
Divino, sanctus regnet ut intus amor:
Eloquiumque potens linguis torpentibus affer
Ut tibi laus omni semper ab ore sonet:
Sanguine quo gentes, quo secula cuncta piavit,
Hæc nobis Christus promeruisse velit!

PSALMUS CXVII.

Anni qua volucris ducitur orbita,
Patrem cœlicolûm perpetuo colunt

* The lady on whom these verses, and the Latin ones that immediately follow, were written, is the celebrated Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, who translated the works of Epictetus from the Greek.

† This and the three following articles are metrical versions of collects in the Liturgy; the first, of that, beginning, "O God, whose nature and property;" the 2d and 3d, of the collects for the 17th and 21st Sundays after Trinity; and the 4th, of the 1st collect in the communion service.

‡ The day on which he received the sacrament for the last time; and eight days before his decease

Quovis sanguine cretæ
Gentes undique carmine.
Patrem, cujus amor blandior in dies
Mortales miseros servat, alit, fovet.
Omnes undique gentes,
Sancto dicite carmine.

---

* Seu te sæva, levitas sive improba fecit,
Musca, meæ comitem, participemque dapis,
Pone metum, rostrum fidens imminte culullo,
Nam licet, et toto prolue læta mero.
Tu, quamcunque tibi velox indulserit annus,
Carpe diem, fugit heu, non revocanda dies!
Quæ nos blanda comes, quæ nos perducat eodem,
Volvitur hora mihi, volvitur hora tibi!
Una quidem, sic fata volunt, tibi vivitur æstas,
Eheu, quid decies plus mihi sexta dedit!
Olim præteritæ numeranti tempora vitæ,
Sexaginta annis non minor unus erit.

---

† Habeo, dedi quod alteri;
Habuique, quod dedi mihi;
Sed quod reliqui, perdidi.

---

‡ E WALTONI PISCATORE PERFECTO EXCERPTUM.

Nunc, per gramina fusi,
Densâ fronde salicti,
Dum defenditur imber,
Molles ducimus horas.
Hic, dum debita morti
Paulum vita moratur,
Nunc rescire priora,
Nunc instare futuris,
Nunc summi prece sanctâ
Patris numen adire est.
Quicquid quæritur ultra,
Cæco ducit amore,
Vel spe ludit inani,
Luctus mox pariturum.

---

* The above is a version of the song, "Busy, curious, thirsty fly."

† These lines are a version of three sentences that are said in the manuscript to be "On the monument of John of Doncaster;" and which are as follow:

What I gave that I have;
What I spent that I had;
What I left that I lost.

‡ These lines are a translation of part of a Song in the Complete Angler of Isaac Walton, written by John Chalkhill, a friend of Spenser, and a good poet in his time. They are but part of the last stanza, which, that the reader may have it entire, is here given at length

If the sun's excessive heat
Make our bodies swelter,
To an osier hedge we get
For a friendly shelter.
Where in a dike,
Perch or pike,
Roach or dace,
We do chase,
Bleak or gudgeon,
Without grudging,
We are still contented.
Or we sometimes pass an hour
Under a green willow,
That defends us from a shower,
Making earth our pillow.
Where we may
Think and pray,
Before death
Stops our breath;
Other joys
Are but toys,
And to be lamented.

*Quisquis iter tendis, vitreas qua lucidus undas
Speluncæ latè Thamesis prætendit opacæ;
Marmoreâ trepidant qua lentæ in fornice guttæ,
Crystallisque latex fractus scintillat acutis;
Gemmaque, luxuriæ nondum famulata nitenti
Splendit, et incoquitur tectum sine fraude metallum;
Ingredere O! rerum purâ cole mente parentem;
Auriferasque auri metuens scrutare cavernas.
Ingredere! Egeriæ sacrum en tibi panditur antrum!
Hic, in se totum, longe per opaca futuri
Temporis, Henricum rapuit vis vivida mentis:
Hic pia Vindamius traxit suspiria, in ipsâ
Morte memor patriæ; hic, Marmontî pectore prima
Cœlestis fido caluerunt semina flammæ.
Temnere opes, pretium sceleris, patriamque tueri
Fortis, ades; tibi sponte patet venerabile limen.

GRÆCORUM EPIGRAMMATUM VERSIONES METRICÆ.

Pag. 2. Brodæi edit. Bas. Ann. 1549.

Non Argos pugilem, non me Messana creavit;
Patria Sparta mihi est. patria clara virûm.
Arte valent isti, mihi robo revivere solo est,
Convenit ut natis, inclyta Sparta, tuis.

Br. 2.

Quandoquidem passim nulla ratione feruntur,
Cuncta cinis, cuncta et ludicra, cuncta nihil.

Br. 5.

Pectore qui duro, crudos de vite racemos
Venturi exsecuit, vascula prima meri,
Labraque constrictus, semesos, jamque terendos
Sub pedibus, populo prætereunte, jacit.
Supplicium huic, quoniam crescentia gaudi læsit,
Det Bacchus, dederat quale, Lycurge, tibi.
Hæ poterant uvæ læto convivia cantu
Mulcere, aut pectus triste levare malis.

Br. 8.

Fert humeris claudum validis per compita cæcus,
Hic oculos socio commodat, ille pedes.

Br. 10.

Qui, mutare vias ausus terræque marisque,
Trajecit montes nauta, fretumque pedes,
Xerxi, tercentum Spartæ Mars obstitit acris
Militibus; terris sit pelagoque pudor!

Br. 11.

Sit tibi, Calliope, Parnassum, cura, tenenti,
Alter ut adsit Homerus, adest etenim alter Achilles.

Br. 18.

Ad Musas Venus hæc; Veneri parete puellæ,
In vos ne missus spicula tendat amor.
Hæc Musæ ad Venerem; sic Marti, diva, mineris,
Huc nunquam volitat debilis iste puer.

---

* The above lines are a version of Pope's verses on his own grotto, which begin, "Thou who shalt stop where Thames' translucent wave"

Br. 19.

Prospera sors nec te strepitoso turbine tollat,
Nec menti injiciat sordida cura jugum;
Nam vita incertis incerta impellitur auris,
Omnesque in partes tracta, retracta fluit;
Firma manet virtus; virtuti innitere, tutus
Per fluctus vitæ sic tibi cursus erit.

Br. 24.

Hora bonis quasi nunc instet suprema fruaris,
Plura ut victurus secula, parce bonis;
Divitiis, utrinque cavens, qui tempore parcit,
Tempore divitiis utitur, ille sapit.

Br. 24.

Nunquam jugera messibus onusta, aut
Quos Gyges cumulos habebat auri;
Quod vitæ satis est, peto, Macrine,
Mi, nequid nimis, est nimis probatum.

Br. 24.

Non opto aut precibus posco ditescere, paucis
Sit contenta mihi vita dolore carens.

Br. 24.

Recta ad pauperiem tendit, cui corpora cordi est
Multa alere, et multas ædificare domos.

Br. 24.

Tu neque dulce putes alienæ accumbere mensæ,
Nec probrosa avidæ grata sit offa gulæ;
Nec ficto fletu, fictis solvare cachinnis,
Arridens domino, collacrymansque tuo.
Lætior haud tecum, tecum neque tristior unquam,
Sed Miliæ ridens, atque dolens Miliæ.

Br. 26.

Nil non mortale est mortalibus; omne quod est hic
Prætereunt, aut hos præterit omne bonum.

Br. 26.

Democrite, invisas homines majore cachinno,
Plus tibi ridendum secula nostra dabunt.
Heraclite, fluat lacrymarum crebrior imber;
Vita hominum nunc plus quod misereris habet.
Interea dubito: tecum me causa nec ulla
Ridere, aut tecum me lacrimare jubet.

Br. 26.

Elige iter vitæ ut possis: rixisque dolisque
Perstrepit omne forum; cura molesta domi est.
Rura labor lassat; mare mille pericula terrent;
Verte solum, fient causa timoris opes;
Paupertas misera est; multæ cum conjuge lites
Tecta ineunt; cœlebs omnia solus ages. [est
Proles aucta gravat, rapta orbat, cæca juventæ
Virtus, canities cauta vigore caret. [oras
Ergo optent homines, aut nunquam in luminis
Venisse, aut visâ luce repente mori.

Elige iter vitæ ut mavis, prudentia lausque
Permeat omne forum; vita quieta domi est.
Rus ornat natura; levat maris aspera lucrum,
Verte solum, donet plena crumena decus;
Pauperies latitat, cum conjuge gaudia multa
Tecta ineunt, cœlebs impediere minus;
Mulcet amor prolis, sopor est sine prole pro fundus;
Præcellit juvenis vi, pietate senex.
Nemo optet nunquam venisse in luminis oras,
Aut periisse, scatet vita benigna bonis.

Br. 27.

Vita omnis scena est ludusque, aut ludere disce
Seria seponens, aut mala dura pati.

Br. 27.

Quæ sine morte fuga est vitæ, quam turba malorum
Non vitanda gravem, non toleranda facit?
Dulcia dat natura quidem, mare, sidera, terras,
Lunaque quas et sol itque reditque vias.
Terror inest aliis, mœrorque, et siquid habebis
Forte boni, ultrices experiere vices.

Br. 27.

Terram adis nudus, de terra nudus abibo,
Quid labor efficiet? non nisi nudus ero.

Br. 27.

Natus eram lacrymans, lacrymans e luce recedo:
Sunt quibus a lacrymis vix vacat ulla dies.
Tale hominum genus est, infirmum, triste, misellum,
Quod mors in cineres solvit, et abdit humo.

Br. 29.

Quisquis adit lectos elatâ uxore secundos,
Naufragus iratas ille retentat aquas.

Br. 30.

Felix ante alios nullius debitor æris;
Hunc sequitur cœlebs; tertius, orbe, venis.
Nec male res cessit, subito si funere sponsam
Ditatus magna dote, recondis humo.
His sapiens lectis, Epicurum quærere frustra
Quales sint monades, quâ fit inane, sinas.

Br. 31.

Optarit quicunque senex sibi longius ævum,
Dignus qui multa in lustra senescat, erit.
Cum procul est, optat, cum venit, quisque senectam
Incusat, semper spe meliora videt.

Br. 46.

Omnis vita nimis brevis est felicibus, una
Nox miseris longi temporis instar habet.

Br. 55.

Gratia ter grata est velox, sin forte moretur,
Gratia vix restat nomine digna suo.

Br. 56.

Seu precc poscatur, seu non, da Jupiter omne,
Magnc, bonum; omne malum, et poscentibus abnue nobis.

Br. 60.

Me, cane vitato, canis excipit alter: eodem
In me animo tellus gignit et unda feras,
Nec mirum; restat lepori conscendere cœlum,
Sidereus tamen hic territat, ecce canis!

Br. 70.

Telluri, arboribus ver frondens, sidera cœlo,
Græciæ et urbs, urbi est ista propago, decus.

Br. 75.

Impia facta patrans, homines fortasse latebis,
Non poteris, meditans prava, latere Deos.

Br. 75.

Antiope satyrum, Danae aurum, Europa juvencum,
Et cycnum fecit, Leda petita Jovem.

Br. 92.

Ævi sat novi quam sim brevis; astra tuenti,
Per certas stabili lege voluta vices,
Tangitur haud pedibus tellus; conviva Deorum
Expleor ambrosiis exhilarorque cibis.

Br. 96.

Quod nimium est sit ineptum, hinc, ut dixere priores,
Et melli nimio fellis amaror inest.

Br. 103.

Puppe gubernatrix sedisti, audacia, prima
Divitiis acuens aspera corda virum;
Sola rates struis infidas, et dulcis amorem
Lucri ulciscendum mox nece sola doces.
Aurea secla hominum, quorum spectandus occllis
E longinquo itidem pontus et orcus erat.

Br. 126.

Ditescis, credo, quid restat? quicquid habebis
In tumulum tecum, morte jubente, trahes?
Divitias cumulas, pereuntes negligis horas
Incremcnta ævi non cumulare potes.

Br. 126.

Mater adulantum, prolesque pecunia curæ,
Teque frui timor est, teque carere dolor.

Br. 126.

Me miserum sors omnis habet; florentibus annis
Pauper eram, nummis diffluit arca senis;
Queis uti poteram quondam Fortuna negavit,
Queis uti nequeo, nunc mihi præbet opes.

Br. 127.

Mnemosyne, ut Sappho mellita voce canentem
Audiit, irata est ne nova Musa foret.

Br. 152.

Cum tacet indoctus, sapientior esse videtur,
Et morbus tegitur, dum premit ora pudor.

Br. 155.

Nunc huic, nunc aliis cedens, cura farra Menippus
Credit, Achæmenidæ nuper agellus eram.
Quod nulli proprium versat Fortuna, putabat
Ille suum stolidus, nunc putat ille suum.

Br. 156.

Non Fortuna sibi te gratum tollit in altum;
At docet, exemplo, vis sibi quanta, tuo.

Br. 162.

Hic, aurum ut reperit, laqueum abjicit, alter ut aurum
Non reperit, nectit quem reperit, laqueum.

Br. 167.

Vive tuo ex animo, vario rumore loquetur
De te plebs audax, hic bene, et ille male.

Br. 168.

Vitæ rosa brevis est, properans si carpere nolis,
Quærenti obveniet mox sine flore rubus.

Br. 170.

Pulicibus morsus, restinctâ lampade, stultus
Exclamat: nunc me cernere desinitis.

Br. 202.

Menodotum pinxit Diodorus, et exit imago,
Præter Menodotum, nullius absimilis.

Br. 205.

Haud lavit Phido, haud tetigit, mihi febre calenti
In mentem ut venit nominis, interii.

Br. 210

Nycticorax cantat lethale, sed ipsa canenti
Demophilo auscultans Nycticorax moritur.

Br. 212.

Hermem Deorum nuncium, pennis levem,
Quo rege gaudent Arcades, furem boum,
Hujus palestræ qui vigil custos stetit,
Clam nocte tollit Aulus, et ridens ait:
Præstat magistro sæpe discipulus suo.

Br. 223.

Qui jacet hic, servus vixit, nunc, lumine cassus,
Dario magno non minus ille potest.

Br. 227.

Funus Alexandri mentitur fama: fidesque
Si Phœbo, victor nescit obire diem.

Br. 241.

Nauta, quis hoc jaceat ne percontere sepulchro,
Eveniat tantum mitior unda tibi!

Br. 256.

Cur opulentus eges? tua cuncta in fœnore ponis.
Sic aliis dives, tu tibi pauper agis.

Br. 262.

Qui pascit barbam si crescit mente, Platoni,
Hirce, parem nitido tua barba facit.

Br. 266.

Clarus Joannes, reginæ affinis, ab alto
Sanguine Anastasii; cuncta sepulta jacent:
Et pius, et recti cultor: non illa jacere
Dicam; stat virtus non subigenda neci.

Br. 267.

Cunctiparens tellus salve, levis esto pusillo
Lysigeni, fuerat non gravis ille tibi.

Br. 285.

Naufragus hic jaceo; contra, jacet ecce colonus!
Idem orcus terræ, sic, pelagoque subest.

Br. 301.

Quid salvere jubes me, pessime? Corripe Gressus;
Est mihi quod non te rideo, plena salus.

Br. 304.

Et ferus est Timon sub terris; janitor orci,
Cerbere te morsu ne, petat ille, cave.

Br. 307.

Vitam a terdecimo sextus mihi finiet annus,
Astra mathematicos si modo vera docent.
Sufficit hoc votis, flos hic pulcherrimus ævi est,
Et senium triplex Nestoris urna capit.

Br. 322.

Zosima, quæ solo fuit olim corpore serva,
Corpore nunc etiam libera facta fuit.

Br. 326.

Exiguum en! Priami monumentum; haud ille meretur
Quale, sed hostiles, quale dederc manus.

Br. 326.

Hector dat gladium Ajaci, dat balteum et Ajax
Hectori, et exitio munus utrique fuit.

Br. 344.

Ut vis, ponte minax; modo tres discessеris ulnas,
Ingemina fluctus, ingeminaque sonum.

Br. 344.

Naufragus hic jaceo; fidens tamen utere velis,
Tutum aliis æquor, me pereunte, fuit.

Br. 398.

Heraclitus ego; indoctæ ne lædire linguæ
Subtile ingenium quæro, capaxque mei,
Unus homo mihi pro sexcentis, turba popelli
Pro nullo, clamo nunc tumulatus idem.

Br. 399.

Ambraciota, vale lux alma, Cleombrotus infit,
Et saltu e muro ditis opaca petit:
Triste nihil passus, animi at de sorte Platonis
Scripta legens, solâ vivere mente cupit.

Br. 399.

Servus, Epictetus, mutilato corpore, vixi,
Pauperieque Irus curaque summa Deûm.

Br. 445

Unde hic Praxiteles? nudam vidistis, Adoni,
Et Pari, et Anchisa, non alius, Venerem.

Br. 451.

Sufflato accendis quisquis carbone lucernam,
Corde meo accendens; ardeo totus ego.

Br. 486.

Jupiter hoc templum, ut siquando relinquit Olympum,
Atthide non alius desit Olympus, habet.

Br. 487.

Civis et externus grati; domus hospita nescit
Quærere, quis, cujus, quis pater, unde venis.

POMPEII.

Br. 487.

Cum fugere haud possit, fractis Victoria pennis,
Te manet imperii, Roma, perenne decus.

Br. 488.

Latrones alibi locupletum quærite tecta,
Assidet huic custos strenua pauperies.

Fortunæ malim adversæ tolerare procellas,
Quam domini ingentis ferre supercilium.

En, Sexto, Sexti meditatur imago, silente,
Orator statua est, statuæque orator imago.

Pulchra est virginitas intacta, at vita periret,
Omnes si vellent virginitate frui;
Nequitiam fugiens, servatâ contrahe lege
Conjugium, ut pro te des hominem patriæ.

Fert humeris, venerabile onus, Cythereius heros
Per Trojæ flammas, densaque tela, patrem,
Clamat et Argivis, vetuli, ne tangite, vita
Exiguum est Marti, sed mihi grande lucrum.

Forma animos hominum capit, at, si gratia desit,
Non tenet; esca natat pulchra, sed hamus abest.

Cogitat aut loquitur nil vir, nil cogitat uxor,
Felici thalamo non, puto, rixa strepit.

Buccina disjecit Thebarum mœnia, struxit
Quæ lyra, quam sibi non concinit harmonia!

Mente senes olim juvenis, Faustine, premebas,
Nunc juvenum terres robore corda senex.
Lævum at utrumque decus, juveni quod præbuit olim
Turba senum, juvenes nunc tribuere seni.

Exceptæ hospitio musæ, tribuere libellos
Herodoto hospitii præmia, quæque suum.

Stella mea, observans stellas. Dii me æthera faxint
Multis ut te oculis sim potis aspicere.

Clara Cheronææ soboles, Plutarche, dicavit
Hanc statuam ingenio, Roma benigna, tuo.
Das bene collatos, quos Roma et Græcia jactat,
Ad Divos paribus passibus ire duces;
Sed similem Plutarche, tuæ describere vitam
Non poteras, regio non tulit ulla parem.

Dat tibi Pythagoram pictor; quod ni ipse tacer
Pythagoras mallet, vocem habuisset opus.

Prolem Hippi et sua quâ meliorem secula nullum
Videre, Archidicen hæc tumulavit humus:
Quam, regum sobolem, nuptam, matrem, atque sororem
Fecerunt nulli sors titulique gravem.

Cecropidis gravis hic ponor, Martique dicatus,
Quo tua signantur gesta, Philippe, lapis.
Spreta jacet Marathon, jacet et Salaminia laurus,
Omnia dum Macedûm gloria et arma premunt.
Sint Demosthenica ut jurata cadavera voce,
Stabo illis qui sunt, quique fuere, gravis.

Floribus in pratis, legi quos ipse, coronam
Contextam variis, do, Rhodoclea, tibi:
Hic anemone humet, confert narcissus odores
Cum violis; spirant lilia mista rosis.
His redimita comas, mores depone superbos,
Hæc peritura nitent; tu peritura nites!

Murem Asclepiades sub tecto ut vidit avarus,
Quid tibi, mus, mecum, dixit, amice, tibi?
Mus blandum ridens, respondit, pelle timorem;
Hic, bone vir, sedem, non alimenta, peto.

Sæpe tuum in tumulum lacrymarum decidit imber
Quem fundit blando junctus amore dolor;
Charus enim cunctis, tonquam, dum vita manebat,
Quique esses natus, cuique sodalis, eras.
Heu quam dura preces sprevit, quam surda querelas
Parca, juventutum non miserata tuam!

Arti ignis lucem tribui, tamen artis et ignis
Nunc ope, supplicii vivit imago mei.
Gratia nulla hominum mentes tenet, ista Promethei
Munera muneribus, si retulere fabri.

Illa triumphatrix Graiûm consueta procorum
Ante suas agmen Lais habere fores,
Hoc Veneri speculum; nolo me cernere qualis
Sum nunc, nec possum cernere qualis eram.

Cresthida fabellas dulces garrire peritam
Prosequitur lacrymis filia mœsta Sami:

Blandam lanifici sociam sine fine loquacem,
Quam tenet hic, cunctas quæ manet, alta quies.

Dicite, Causidici, gelido nunc marmore magni
Mugitum tumulus comprimit Amphiloci.

Si forsan tumulum quo conditur Eumarus au fers
Nil lucri facies; ossa habet et cinerem.

EPICETI.

Me, rex deorum, tuque, duc, necessitas,
Quo, lege vestrâ, vita me feret mea.
Sequar libenter, sin reluctari velim,
Fiam scelestus, nec tamen minus sequar.

E THEOCRITO.

Poeta, lector, hic quiescit Hipponax,
Si sis scelestus, præteri, procul, marmor.
At te bonum si nôris, et bonis natum,
Tutum hic sedile, et si placet, sopor tutus.

EUR. MED. 193—203.

Non immerito culpanda venit
Proavûm væcors insipientia,
Qui convivia lautasque dapes
Hilarare suis jussere modis
Cantum, vitæ dulce levamen,
At nemo feras iras hominum,
Domibus claris exitiales,
Voce aut fidibus pellere docuit
Quis tamen aptam ferre medelam
Utile cunctis hoc opus esset;
Namque, ubi mensas onerant epulæ,
Quorsum dulcis luxuria soni?
Sat lætitiâ sine subsidiis,
Pectora molli mulcet dubiæ
Copia cœnæ.

Τοῖος Ἄρης βροτολοιγὸς ἐνὶ πτολέμοισι μέμηνε
Κωὶ τοῖος Παφίην πλῆξεν ἔρωτι Θεάν.

The above is a Version of a Latin Epigram on the famous John Duke of Marlborough, by the Abbe Salvini, which is as follows:

Haud alio vultu, fremuit Mars acer in armis:
Haud alio, Cypriam percutit ore Deam.

The Duke was, it seems, remarkably handsome in his person, to which the second line has reference

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SEPTEM ÆTATES.

Prima parit terras ætas, siccatque secunda,
Evocat Abramum dein tertia: quarta relinquit
Ægyptum; templo Solomonis quinta supersit;
Cyrum sexta timet; lætatur septima Christo.

---

*His Tempelmanni numeris descripseris orbem,
*Cum sex centuriis Judæo millia septem.

---

* To the above Lines, (which are unfinished, and can therefore be only offered as a fragment) in the Doctor's manuscript, are prefixed the words, "Geographia Metrica." As we are referred, in the first of the verses, to Templeman, for having furnished the numerical computations that are the subject of them, his work has been accordingly consulted, the title of which is, 'A New

Myrias [b]Ægypto cessit bis septima pingui.
Myrias adscisceit sibi nonagesima septem
Imperium qua Turea[c] ferox exercet iniquum.
Undecies binas decadas et millia septem,
Sortitur [d]Pelopis tellus quæ nomine gaudet.
Myriadas decies septem numerare jubebit
Pactu[d] Arabs: decies octo sibi Persa[d] requirit.
Myriadas sibi pulchra duas, duo millia poscit
Parthenope.[d] [e]Novies vult tellus mille Sicana.
[f]Papa suo regit imperio ter millia quinque.
Cum sex centuriis numerat sex millia Tuscus.[g]
Centuriâ Ligures[h] augent duo millia quartâ. [dæ.
Centuriæ octavam decadem addit Lueca[i] secun-
Ut dicas, spatiis quam latis imperet orbi
[k]Russia, myriadas ter denas adde treentis:
[l]Sardiniam cum sexcentis sex millia complent.
Cum sexagenis, dum plura recluserit ætas,
Myriadas ter mille homini dat terra[m] colendas.
Vult sibi vicenas millesimo myrias addi,
Vicenis quinas, Asiam[n] metata celebrem.
Se quinquagenis octingentesima jungit
Myrias, ut menti pateat tota Africa[o] doctæ.
Myriadas septem decies Europa[p] ducentis
Et quadragenis quoque ter tria millia jungit.
Myriadas denas dat, quinque et millia, sexque
Centurias, et tres decadas Europa Britannis.[q]
Ter tria myriadi conjungit millia quartæ,
Centuriæ quartæ decades quinque[r] Anglia nectit.
Millia myriadi septem fœcunda secundæ
Et quadragenis decadas quinque addit Ierne.[s]
Quingentis quadragenis socialis adauget
Millia Belga[t] novem.
Ter sex centurias Hollandia[t] jactat opima.
Undecimum Camber[t] vult septem millibus addi.

Survey of the Globe," and which professes to give an accurate mensuration of all the empires, kingdoms, and other divisions thereof, in the square miles that they respectively contain. On comparison of the several numbers in these verses with those set down by Templeman, it appears that nearly half of them are precisely the same; the rest are not quite so exactly done. For the convenience of the reader, it has been thought right to subjoin each number, as it stands in Templeman's works, to that in Dr. Johnson's verses which refers to it.

a. In this first article that is versified, there is an accurate conformity in Dr. Johnson's number to Templeman's; who sets down the square miles of Palestine at 7,600.—b. The square miles of Egypt are, in Templeman, 140,700.—c. The whole Turkish empire, in Templeman, is computed at 960,057 square miles.—d. In the four following articles, the numbers in Templeman and in Johnson's verses are alike We find, accordingly, the Morea, in Templeman, to be set down at 7,220 square miles.—Arabia, at 700,000.—Persia at 800,000.—And Naples, at 22,000.—e. Sicily, in Templeman, is put down at 9,400.—f. The Pope's dominions, at 14,968.—g. Tuscany, at 6,640.—h. Genoa, in Templeman, as in Johnson likewise, is set down at 2.400.—l. Lucca, at 286.—k. The Russian empire, in the 29th plate of Templeman, is set down at 3,303,485 sq. miles.—l. Sardinia, in Templeman, as likewise in Johnson, 6,600.—m. The habitable world, in Templeman, is computed, in square miles, at 30,666,806.—n. Asia, at 10,257,487.—o. Africa, at 8,506,208.—p. Europe, at 2,749,349.—q. The British dominions, at 105,634.—r. England, as likewise in Johnson's expression of the number, at 49,450.—s. Ireland, at 27,457.—t. In the three remaining instances, which make the whole that Dr. Johnson appears to have rendered into Latin verse, we find the numbers exactly agreeing with those of Templeman; who makes the square miles of the United Provinces, 9,540; of the Province of Holland, 1,800; and of Wales, 7,011.

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